The Bancroft Library

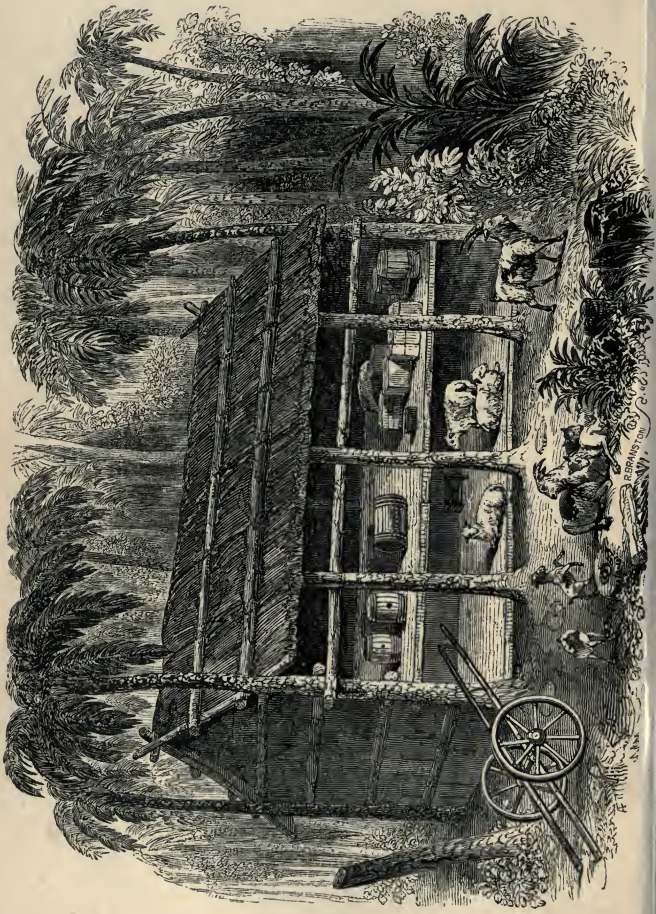
University of California • Berkeley

In Memory of

HERMAN D. NICHOLS

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/mastermanreadyor02marrrich



FRONTISPIECE.

MASTERMAN READY;

OR,

THE WRECK OF THE PACIFIC.

WRITTEN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

BY

CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMANS,
PATERNOSTER ROW.
1842.

Printed by J. L. Cox & Sons, 75, Great Queen Street,
Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

MASTERMAN READY;

OR,

THE WRECK OF THE PACIFIC.

READY FINDING THE KIDS.

CHAPTER I.

At the end of the first volume we left off where our party on the island had taken possession

of their new house, at the commencement of the rainy season. It was on Saturday, and a storm had come on, which had continued during the whole night; for the storms are very violent in the tropical countries, when the rainy season (which is equivalent to our winter) first makes its appearance. When, however, they all rose up the next morning, the clouds had cleared off, and the sun was shining bright. Ready and Juno were the first out of the house—Ready with the telescope under his arm, which he always took with him when he went his rounds, as he termed it, in the morning.

"Well, Juno," said Ready, "this is a fine morning after the rain."

"Yes, Massa Ready, very fine morning; but how I get fire light, and make kittle boil for breakfast, I really don't know—stick and cocoa-nut trash all so wet."

"Before I went to bed last night, Juno, I covered up the embers with ashes, put some

stones over them, and then some cocoa-nut branches; so I think you will find some fire there yet. You see, Juno, we must do our best; we can't do every thing at once; but next year, if we live and do well, I dare say we shall have a stack of dry fuel, and well thatched, all ready for the rainy season. I was going my morning's round, but I will stay a little and help you."

"Tank you, Massa Ready; plenty rain fall last night."

"Yes, not a little, Juno; you must not expect to find the water at the well very clear this morning; indeed, I doubt if you will see the well at all. Here's some stuff which is not very wet."

"I got plenty of fire, too," replied Juno, who had removed the branches and stones, and was now on her knees blowing up the embers.

"You'll do very well now, Juno," said Ready; "besides, Master William will be out directly—so I'll leave you."

Ready whistled to the dogs, who came bounding out, and then set off on his round of inspection. He first directed his steps to the well in the ravine; but, instead of the gushing spring and the limpid, clear water, with which the cask sunk for a well had been filled, there was now a muddy torrent, rushing down the ravine, and the well was covered with it, and not to be distinguished.

"I thought as much," said Ready, musing over the impetuous stream; "well, better too much water than too little." Ready waded through, as he wished to examine the turtle-pond, which was on the other side of the stream. Finding all right, he again crossed the water, where it was now spread wide over the sandy beach, until he came to the other point, where he had moored his boat, both by the head and stern, with a rope, and a heavy stone made fast to it, as an anchor.

From this point, as usual, he surveyed the

horizon with his telescope; not that he thought that there was a chance of a vessel arriving among these islands; but, still, as it was possible, he took the trouble; but never except when he went out in the morning alone, as he was aware that the very circumstance of his so doing would make Mr. Seagrave melancholy and unsettled. As usual, he dropped the telescope on his arm, after his survey, saying to himself, "Little use doing that."

The gale having blown off shore, the boat had dragged her moorings, and was so far out, that Ready could not get at her.

"Here's a puzzle," said the old man; "how foolish of me not to have made a line fast to the shore. I'll not trust myself to John Shark by swimming to the boat."

"Let me see." Ready took the halyards and sheets belonging to the boat's sails, which he had left on the beach, and bent one on to the other until he had sufficient length of

rope. He then made a piece of wood, about two feet long, fast by the middle to the end of the rope, and, after one or two attempts, contrived to throw it into the boat. The piece of wood caught under one of the thwarts, and this enabled him to draw the boat to the shore.

Having baled out the water which had fallen into her during the storm, he then landed again and examined the garden.

"Now to find the sheep and goats," said Ready, "and then my morning's walk is over. Now, Romulus, now, Remus, boys, find them out," continued he; and the dogs, who appeared to know what he was in search of, went away in pursuit, and soon found the sheep and two of the goats, but the third goat was not with them.

"Why, where can Black Nanny be?" muttered old Ready, stopping a little while; at last he heard a bleat, in a small copse of brushwood, to which he directed his steps, followed by the dogs. "I thought as much," said the

old man, as he perceived Nanny lying down in the copse with two new-born kids at her side. "Come, my little fellows, we must find some shelter for you," said he, taking one up under each arm. "Come, Nanny. Down, Romulus, down, sir," said he to the dog, who had jumped up at the kids. "How dare you, sir? Down, I say. Aye! there you are down, sure enough." And so he was, for Nanny, not liking the dog's approach to her young ones, had rushed upon him, and butted him till he tumbled over and over. Ready walked back to the house, and brought in the kids, followed by Nanny. He found Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave and the children all dressed. Caroline and Tommy gave a scream of delight when they saw the little kids, and even little Albert clapped his hands. As soon as Ready put them down on the ground, Tommy and Caroline had each of them their arms round one.

"I've brought an addition to our family, Mrs.

Seagrave," said Ready: "I must request you to allow them to remain in the house until I can knock up a little shelter for them. This is only a beginning; I expect we shall soon have more."

As soon as the children could be persuaded to part with the kids, Nanny was tied up in a corner, and was very content with fondling and nursing her progeny. Juno and William brought in the breakfast, and as soon as it was over, Mr. Seagrave said, "Now, Ready, I think we must hold a council, and make arrangements as to our allotted duties and employments during the rainy season. We have a great deal to do, and must not be idle."

"Yes, sir, we have a great deal to do, and, to get through our work, we must have order and method in our doings. I've lived long enough to know how much can be done by regularity and discipline. Why, sir, there is more work got out of men in a well-conducted

man-of-war than there can in the merchant service in double the time. And why so? Because every thing is in its place, and there is a place for every thing. If you want any thing, you do not lose time looking for it, because you know where to lay your hand upon it. Besides, sir, every man knows what he has to do—and others know it also."

"I agree with you, Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave; "method is every thing. While one careless little girl is looking for her thimble, another will have finished her work; and I promise you that, inside of the house, as soon as we have the shelves and nails put up, every thing shall be in its place, and there shall be a place for every thing."

"I beg your pardon, madam, if I talk too much; but I assure you I never should have known what could have been done by order and arrangement, if I had not been pressed on board of a man-of-war. After having been so long in

the merchant service, where all was noise and confusion at the best of times, I found that every thing was done in silence; indeed, there was no occasion for any one to speak except the officer carrying on duty. Every man was to his post; every one had a rope to haul upon, or a rope to let go; the boatswain piped, and in a few seconds every sail was set or taken in as was required. It seemed to me at first like magic. And you observe, Mr. Seagrave, that when there is order and discipline, every man becomes of individual importance; as any neglect of any one in the duty allotted to him immediately puts every body else out, and every thing goes wrong: besides, the blame is always certain to be given to the party who is guilty. If I learnt nothing else on board of a man-of-war, I learnt to make the most of time, and the most of the strength which you could command."

"You are very right, Ready; you must teach us to do the same," replied Mr. Seagrave.

"We have so much to do, that I hardly know where to begin; yet, sir, we must work at present how we can, and when we can, until we have got things into a little better order. We have done well up to the present."

"What do you think we ought to do first, Ready?"

"Well, sir, our first job will be to haul up the boat and secure her from harm; we will half-dock her in the sand, and cover her over; for I do not think it will be safe to go in her now to the other side of the island, where the sea will always be rough; indeed, the weather will be too uncertain to calculate upon even two or three hours of smooth water."

"There I perfectly agree with you. Now what is the next?"

"Why, sir, we must not leave the tents where they are, but take them down, and as soon as they are dry, stow them away, for we may want them by-and-by; then, sir, we must build a large

outhouse for our stores and provisions, with a thatched roof, and a floor raised about four feet from the ground; and then, under the floor, the sheep and goats will have a protection from the weather. We can easily run that up; we must cover in three sides, and that we can do with cocoa-nut boughs in a very short time. Then, sir, there is the fish-pond to make, and also a salt-pan to cut out of the rock; but those we must do when we have no other work. Then we have two more long jobs. One is, to go through the woods and examine the stores we have left on the other side of the island, sort and arrange them all ready for bringing here after the rains are over; and we must also explore the island a little, sir, and find out what it produces; for you see, sir, at present we know nothing of it: we may find a great many things useful to us, a great many trees and fruits, and I hope and trust we may be able to find some more grass for our live stock; for you see, sir, if it is to increase so as to be

useful to us, we shall not have food for them here; especially if we want more land for our seeds, which we probably shall."

"I agree with you in all you say, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave; now how shall we divide our strength?"

"We will not divide at present, sir, if you please. Juno has plenty to do indoors with Mrs. Seagrave; Master William, and you, and I, will first secure the boat and stow away the tents and gear; after that, we will set about the outbuilding, and work at it when we can. If Juno has any time to spare, she had better collect the cocoa-nut leaves, and pile them up for fuel; and Master Tommy will, I dare say, go with her, and shew her how to draw them along."

"Yes, I'll shew her," said Tommy, getting on his feet.

"Not just now, Master Tommy," said Ready, "but as soon as your mamma can spare her to go with you. Come, sir, a few hours of weather

like this is not to be lost," continued Ready; we shall have more rain before the day is over, I expect. If you please, sir, I will first go to the tent for the shovels, and take them down with me; then I will haul the boat round to the beach and meet you there. You and Master William can take some cord, tie up a large bundle of cocoa-nut boughs, sling it to the wheels, and draw it down to the beach and meet me."

"That will do, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave. "Come, William."

MR. SEAGRAVE AND WILLIAM FISHING.

CHAPTER II.

As so many cocoa-nut trees had been cut down to build the house, there were plenty of boughs lying in every direction, and William and Mr. Seagrave had soon procured sufficient. They found, on their arrival at the beach, that Ready had brought round the boat, and had laid the

rollers all ready for hauling it up. In a very short time the boat was drawn up about ten yards from the water's edge, which Ready said was quite sufficient; they then dug from under with their shovels until the boat was sunk about half down in the sand.

Having filled in the sand all round her up to her gunnel, the boat was then carefully covered over with the boughs, which were weighed down with sand that they might not be blown away.

"I don't see why you should cover the boat up in this way, Ready; the rain won't hurt her," observed William.

"No, sir, the rain won't do her any harm, but the sun will, when it bursts out occasionally; for it's very powerful when it does shine, and it would split her all to pieces."

"I forgot that," replied William. "What shall we do now, Ready?"

"Suppose, as we have two hours to dinner-

time, you run for the lines, Master William, and we'll try for some fish."

"We cannot all three of us fish with only two lines," said Mr. Seagrave.

"No, sir; and as Master William knows how to catch them, suppose you remain with him, and I will go up and collect wood and chips for Juno's fire. She was hard pressed for it this morning, it was so wet; but, if once piled up, it will soon be dry. Be careful, Mr. Seagrave, if you please, and do not hold the lines tight in your hands, or you may be jerked into the water. I've cautioned Master William, but it may be as well for you to caution him again, for he is young and very eager."

Ready met William returning with the lines, and thought it right to remind him of the danger he ran when he was fishing the last time, and then went on to his work, dragging after him the wheels and the axe, as they were no longer required at the beach.

Mr. Seagrave and William were very fortunate; before the two hours were expired they had caught eight large fish, which they brought up to the house slung on the boat-hook, which Ready had advised them to take with them to haul the fish out of the water, that they might not break their lines. Tommy hallooed loudly for fish for dinner, and as they had caught so many, it was agreed that the dinner should be put off until some should be got ready, and they were not sorry to eat them instead of the salt pork which was to have been their only fare on that day.

They had hardly sat down to table, when the rain came pattering down on the roof, and in a quarter of an hour the storm was as violent, and the thunder and lightning as terrific as on the day before. All the out-door labour was again suspended. Mrs. Seagrave, Juno, and Caroline, took their work, for there was plenty to do with the needle and thread, and Ready soon found employment for the rest. William and Mr. Sea-

grave unlaid some thick rope, that Ready might make smaller and more useful rope with the yarns. Ready took up his sailing needles, and worked eyelet holes in the canvas screens (which they had put up in a hurry), so that they might be drawn to and fro as required; and Tommy was given a tangled hank of twine to clear out, which, as he was tired of doing nothing, he worked at very patiently. As soon as Ready had hung up the curtains, he looked under the bedsteads for a large bundle, and said, as he opened it, "I shall now decorate Madam Seagrave's sleeping place. It ought to be handsomer than the others." The bundle was composed of the ship's ensign, which was red, and a large, square, yellow flag with the name of the ship *Pacific* in large black letters upon it. These two flags Ready festooned and tied up round the bed-place, so as to give it a very gay appearance, and also to hide the rough walls of the cottage.

"Indeed, Ready, I am much obliged to you,"

said Mrs. Seagrave, when he had finished; "it is really quite grand for this place."

"It's the best use we can put them to now, madam," said Ready.

"I am afraid so," replied Mr. Seagrave, thoughtfully.

"Ready," said William, after the candles were lighted, you once half promised me that you would tell me your history; I wish you would tell us some of it now, as it will pass away the evening."

"Well, Master William, I did say so, and I shall keep my word. When you have heard my story, you will say that I have been very foolish in my time; and so I have; but if it proves a warning to you, it will, at all events, be of some use."

"We shall like to hear it very much," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Well, madam, then you shall hear it;" and Ready then commenced his history as follows:

History of Old Ready.

" Of course, you wish to know who my father and mother were: that is soon told. My father was the captain of a merchant vessel, which traded from South Shields to Hamburgh, and my poor mother, God bless her, was the daughter of a half-pay militia captain, who died about two months after their marriage. The property which the old gentleman had bequeathed to my mother was added to that which my father had already vested in the brig, and he then owned one-third of the vessel; the other two-thirds were the property of a very rich ship-builder and owner, of the name of Masterman. What with the profits of the share he held of the vessel and his pay as captain, my father was well to do. Mr. Masterman, who had a very high opinion of my father, and gained much money by his exertions and good management, was present at the marriage,

and when I was born, about a year afterwards, he stood for me as godfather. Every one considered that this was a most advantageous circumstance for me, and congratulated my father and mother, for Mr. Masterman was a bachelor, of nearly sixty years, without any near relations. It is true, that he was very fond of money; but that they said was all the better, as he could not take it away with him when he died. An end, however, was soon put to all their worldly ideas, for a year after I was born, my father was drowned at sea, his vessel and the whole of her crew being lost on the Texel sands; and my mother found herself a widow, with a child scarcely weaned, when she was but twenty-two years of age.

"It was supposed that my mother would still have sufficient to live upon, as the ship had been insured at two-thirds of her value; but, to the astonishment of everybody, Mr. Masterman contrived to make it appear that it was his two-thirds of the vessel which had been insured."

"What is insurance?" inquired William.

"Insurance, my dear boy, is paying a certain sum to people who are called underwriters, that in case the vessel or cargo is lost or damaged, the loss or damage is made good to the owners of the vessel or cargo. You pay in proportion to the risk incurred. For instance, in war time you pay ten per cent.—that is, ten pounds for every hundred pounds you insure. Supposing you wished to insure one thousand pounds on a vessel or cargo, and ten per cent. was required, you would, if the vessel came home safe, pay the underwriters one hundred pounds; if, on the contrary, the vessel was lost, the underwriters would have to pay you one thousand pounds, the sum which you had insured. Do you understand?"

"Yes; I understand, papa. But I do not understand how an underwriter can make money by it; for many vessels are lost or taken during a war, and then he has such large sums to pay."

"You must recollect, that for one that is taken

or lost, there are fifty or more which arrive safe; and as the underwriters are paid for all those that arrive safe, the business is profitable; indeed it must be so, or there would not be so many underwriters and insurance companies. I beg your pardon for the interruption, Ready."

"No need, Mr. Seagrave; we never should lose an opportunity of teaching the young; indeed you have taught the old as well this time, for I was not so clear of the matter before as I am now. Well, sir; how far the assertion of Mr. Masterman was correct or not, it was impossible at the time to say; but I do know that everybody cried out 'shame,' and that if he did deprive the widow, he had much to answer for; for the Bible says, 'pure religion is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction' (of course, Master William, with a view of assisting them), 'and to keep yourself unspotted in the world.' The consequence was, that my mother had little or nothing to live upon; but she found friends

who assisted her, and she worked embroidery, and contrived to get on somehow until I was eight or nine years of age."

"But did not your godfather, Mr. Masterman, come forward to the assistance of your mother?" inquired Mr. Seagrave.

"No, sir, strange to say, he did not; and that made people talk the more. I believe it was the abuse of him, which he did not fail to hear, and which he ascribed to my mother, which turned him away from us; perhaps it was his own conscience, for we always dislike those we have injured, becoming vexed with them instead of being vexed with ourselves."

"Unfortunately, there is great truth in that remark of yours, Ready," observed Mr. Seagrave; "still, it is strange that he did not do something."

"It was very strange, sir—at least, so it appeared at the time; but he was very fond of money, and irritated at the reports and obser-

vations which were made about him. But, to go on, sir, I was a strong, active, hardy boy, and, whenever I could escape from my mother or school, was always found by the water-side or on board of the vessels; for I took naturally to every thing connected with the sea. In the summer time I was half the day in water, and was a very good swimmer. My mother perceived my fondness for the profession, and tried all she could to divert my thoughts some other way. She told me of the dangers and hardships which sailors went through, and always ended with my father's death and a flood of tears.

"We certainly are of a perverse nature, as I have often heard the clergyman say, for it appears to me that we always wish to do that which we are told not to do. If my mother had not been always persuading me against going to sea, I really believe I might have staid at home. Mine was a proud nature when I was a child. I suppose I got it from my

father, for my mother, poor thing, was humble enough. I could not bear that any boy should do what I could not; and I often ventured so rashly, that I might do more than other boys dared to do, that it was a wonder, as every one then said, that I had not lost my life a hundred times; and my poor mother was continually hearing of some danger that I was in, and she would first scold and then entreat me not to be so venturesome, and then she would go into her room and weep and pray, for I was her only hope and comfort, and all that bound her to the world. I've often thought since, how selfish and unfeeling I must have been. I was too young to know what pain I was giving her, and how anxiety was preying upon her, all on my account. Children cannot feel it; if they did, they would do otherwise, for our hearts are seldom hard until we grow older."

"I agree with you, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave. "If children really knew how much

their parents suffer when they behave ill, how alarmed they are at any proofs of wickedness in them, they would be much better."

"We never find that out, sir, till it is too late," continued Ready. "Well, sir, I was little more than nine years old, when, on a very windy day, and the water rough, a hawser, by which a vessel was fast to the wharf, was carried away with a violent jerk, and the broken part, as it flew out, struck a person who was at the edge of the wharf, and knocked him into the sea. I heard the crying out, and the men from the wharf and from the ships were throwing ropes to him, but he could not catch hold of them; indeed, he could not swim well, and the water was rough. I caught a rope that had been hauled in again, and leapt off the wharf.

"Young as I was, I swam like a duck, and put the rope into his hands just as he was going down. He clung to it as drowning men only can cling, and was hauled to the piles, and

READY SAVING MR. MASTERMAN.

soon afterwards a boat, which had been lowered from the stern of one of the vessels, picked us both up. We were taken to a public-house, and put into bed till dry clothes could be sent for us; and then I found that the person I had saved was my godfather, Mr. Masterman. Every one was loud in my praise; and, although perhaps I ought not to say it (and, indeed, I do not say it out of vanity), it was a bold act

for so young a boy as I was. The sailors took me home to my mother in a sort of triumphant procession; and she, poor thing, when she heard what I had done, embraced me over and over again, one moment rejoicing at my preservation, and the next weeping bitterly at the thoughts of the danger I had encountered, and the probability that my bold spirit would lead me into still greater."

"But she did not blame you for what you had done?"

"O no, Master William; she felt that I had done my duty towards my neighbour, and perhaps she felt in her own heart that I had returned good for evil; but she did not say so. The next day, Mr. Masterman called upon us; he certainly looked very foolish and confused when he asked for his godson, whom he had so long neglected. My mother, who felt how useful he might be to me, received him very kindly; but I had been often told of his neglect of me and my

mother, and of his supposed unfair conduct towards my father, and had taken a violent dislike to him; his advances towards me were therefore very coolly received. I felt glad that I had saved him; but although I could not exactly understand my own feelings at the time, I am ashamed to say that my pleasure was not derived from having done a good action, so much as indulging a feeling of revenge in having put one under an obligation who had treated me ill: this arose from my proud spirit, which my mother could not check. So you see, Master William, there was very little merit in what I had done, as, after I had done it, I indulged those feelings which I ought to have checked."

"I think I could not have helped feeling the same, Ready, under such circumstances," replied William.

"If I had felt it in a true Christian spirit, Master William, it would have been different. Returning good for evil is the great duty of a

Christian, and had I saved Mr. Masterman, knowing that I was saving him with that feeling in my heart, it had been praiseworthy; but I did not know that it was he when I saved him; and the question is, had I known who it was that was struggling in the water, should I have risked my life for him? or if I had done so, would it not have been with the same feeling which I indulged in after having saved him—a feeling that I had revenged myself on him for his conduct, for there is no revenge greater than in putting an enemy under an obligation?"

"You analyze yourself very minutely, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave, "and I think hardly do justice to yourself."

"The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, sir," replied Ready. "The impulse which induced me to act was good; the feeling which I indulged in afterwards took away the whole merit of the deed. I am stating what I believe to be the truth, sir; and an old man like me can look upon the

past without bias, but not without regret; well, sir, to go on with my story. Mr. Masterman made but a short visit; he told my mother that he would now take care of me, and bring me up to the business of a ship-builder as soon as I was old enough to leave school, and that in the mean-time he would pay all my expenses. My poor mother was very grateful, and shed tears of joy; and when Mr. Masterman went away, she embraced me, and said, that now she was happy, as I should have a profession on shore and not go to sea. I must do justice to Mr. Masterman; he kept his word, and sent money to my mother, so that she became quite cheerful and comfortable, and every one congratulated her, and she used to fondle me, and say, it was all through me that she was relieved from her distress."

"How happy that must have made you, Ready," said William.

"Yes, sir, it did, but it made me also very proud; strange to say, I could not conquer my

dislike to Mr. Masterman; I had nourished the feeling too long. I could not bear that my mother should be under obligations to him, or that he should pay for my schooling; it hurt my foolish pride, young as I then was; and although my mother was happy, I was not. Besides, as I was put to a better school, and was obliged to remain with the other boys, I could no longer run about the wharfs, or go on board the vessels, as before; and thus I was deprived of all my former enjoyments. I did not see then, as I do now, that it was all for my good; but I became discontented and unhappy, merely because I was obliged to pay attention to my learning, and could no longer have my own way. The master complained of me; and Mr. Masterman called and scolded me well. I became more disobedient, and then, by Mr. Masterman's desire, I was punished. This irritated me against him, and I made up my mind that I would run away and go to sea. You see, Master William, I was

all in the wrong; and so will all boys be who are proud, and think they know better than those who have charge of them; and now only see, Master William, what I probably lost by my foolish conduct. I say, *probably*, for no one can calculate or foresee what is to take place; but, as far as appearances went, I had every prospect of receiving a good education—of succeeding Mr. Masterman in his business, and, very probably, of inheriting his large fortune; so that I might have been at this time a rich and well-educated man, surrounded with all the comforts and luxuries of life; perhaps, with an amiable wife and large family round me, to make me still happier, instead of being what I now am, a poor, worn-out old seaman upon a desert isle. I point this out to you, Master William, to shew how one false and foolish step in the young may affect their whole prospects in life; and, instead of enabling them to sail down with the stream of prosperity, may leave them to struggle against

the current of adversity, as has been the case with me."

"It is, indeed, a good lesson, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave.

"It is; not that I repine at my lot, even while I regret the errors that led to it. I am not discontented with my position, for that were sinful. An all-wise and gracious God disposes of us as he thinks best; and I can now say with perfect sincerity, 'Thy will, not mine, be done.'"

"Your misfortunes have, however, proved an incalculable benefit to us, Ready," observed Mrs. Seagrave; "for had you not gone to sea, and been on board the ship when the crew deserted us, what would have become of us?"

"Well, madam, it is some comfort to think that a worn-out old seaman like myself has been of some use.—Perhaps, madam, as it is our usual time to go to bed, I had better leave off now, and tell some more of my history to-morrow evening."

"If you please, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave. "William, my dear, bring the Bible."

As soon as the evening prayers were finished, the screens were put up, and they were soon all in bed and fast asleep.

BUILDING THE FOWL-HOUSE.

CHAPTER III.

THE bleating of the kids woke them the next morning earlier than usual. The weather was again fine, and the sun shining brightly, and Ready turned out Nanny and her progeny. They had an excellent breakfast of fried fish, and then Mr. Seagrave, Ready, and William, went

out to their work: the two first took down the tents, and spread the canvas on the ground, that it might be well dried, while William went in pursuit of the fowls, which had not been seen for a day or two. After half an hour's search in the cocoa-nut grove, he heard the cock crow, and soon afterwards found them all. He threw them some split peas, which he had brought with him, for the barley and wheat they had resolved to save, that they might sow them as soon as they had more ground cleared; and then, if flour should run short, they had several casks of it on the other side of the island, which they had saved when the ship had been broken up, and were therefore in no immediate want. The fowls, which were hungry enough, followed William home to the house, where he left them and went to join Ready and his father.

"Then, Master William, I think, now that we have spread out the tents, we will, if Mr. Seagrave approves of it, all set to at once and knock

up a fowl-house: it won't be more than a day's job, and then the creatures will have a home. There are four very thick cocoa-nut trees close to the house; we will build it under them; it will be a good job over." Mr. Seagrave assented, and they set immediately to work. There were many thin poles left, the tops of the cocoa-nut trees which had been cut down to build the house; these they nailed to the trunks of the four trees, so as to make a square, and then they ran up rafters for a pitched roof.

"Now, sir, this is only rough work; we will first put up a perch or two for them, and then close in the side, and thatch the roof with cocoa-nut branches; but there's Juno taking in the dinner, so we'll finish it afterwards."

After their meal the work was renewed; Mr. Seagrave collected the branches while William and Ready worked upon the sides and roof, and before the evening closed in, the fowl-house was complete. William enticed the fowls down

to it with some more split peas, and then walked away.

"Now, sir, the creatures will soon find their way in; and by-and-by, when I have time, I'll make a door to the entrance. I think Miss Caroline might be put into authority here, and take care of the fowls and chickens when they come."

"Yes, that shall be her charge," said William; "she'll be delighted when she hears that she's to be mistress of the hen-roosts. And now I think we had better roll up the canvas of the tents; we have had a splendid day, and may not be so fortunate to-morrow."

"Very true, sir; we will get them housed, and stow them away under the bed places; there is plenty of room." By the time that they had folded up the canvas, and William had brought in Nanny and the kids, the sun had set, and they went into the house. Ready was requested to go on with his history, which he did as follows:—

"I said last night that I determined to run away from school, and go to sea; but I did not tell you how I managed it. I had no chance of getting out of the school unperceived, except after the boys were all put to bed. The room that I slept in was at the top of the house—the doors I knew were all locked; but there was a trap-door which led out on the roof, fastened by a bolt inside, and a ladder leading up to it; and I determined that I would make my escape by that way. As soon as all the other boys were fast asleep, I arose and dressed myself very quietly, and then left the room.

"The moon shone bright, which was lucky for me, and I gained the trap-door without any noise. I had some difficulty in forcing it up, as it was heavy for a boy of my age; but I contrived to do so at last, and gained the roof of the house. I looked round as I stood in the gutter —there were the ships in the port, and the sea in the distance, and I felt as if I was already free:

I forgot that I had to get down to the ground. At last I began looking about me, to see how it was to be done, and after walking to and fro several times, I decided that I could slip down by a large water-pipe which went right down to the ground; it was so far detached from the bricks, that I could get my small fingers round it; and I was then as light as a feather, and active as a cat. I climbed over the parapet, and, clinging to the pipe firmly with my hands and knees, I slid down, and arrived at the bottom in safety."

"It's a wonder you did not break your neck, Ready," observed Mrs. Seagrave.

"It was, indeed, ma'am; I often think of it now—but I thought of nothing then except my own wilful way. As soon as I was landed in the flower-bed, which was below, I hastened to the iron gates at the entrance, and soon climbed up and got to the other side into the road. I had no hat, for all our hats were hung on pegs in the school-room below; but I didn't care for that.

I started as fast as I could towards the port, and when I arrived at the wharf, I perceived that a vessel had her topsails loose, and meant to take advantage of the ebb-tide which had just made; the men were singing 'Yo heave yo,' getting the anchor up; and as I stood watching, almost making up my mind that I would swim off to her, I perceived that a man pushed off in her jolly-boat, and was sculling to a post a little higher up, where a hawser had been made fast; I ran round, and arrived there before he had cast off the rope; without saying a word, I jumped into the boat.

"'What do you want, youngster?' said the seaman.

"'I want to go to sea,' said I, breathless; 'take me on board—pray do.'

"'Well,' said he, 'I heard the captain say he wanted an apprentice, and so you may come.'

"He sculled the boat back again to the vessel, and I climbed up her side.

"'Who are you?' said the captain.

"I told him the same story, that I wanted to go to sea.

"'You are too little and too young.'

"'No, I am not,' replied I.

"'Why, do you think that you dare go aloft?'

"'I'll shew you,' replied I; and I ran up the rigging like a cat, and went out at the top-gallant yard-arm.

"When I came down, the captain said, 'Well, I think you'll make a sharp seaman by-and-by; so I'll take you, and, as soon as I get to London, I'll bind you apprentice. Where's your hat?'

"'I left it behind me,' replied I.

"'Never mind; a red nightcap is a better thing,' said the captain; and he went down to the cabin, and brought me one up.

"The ship, which was a collier, was soon out of port, and before the day had dawned I found myself on the wide ocean, which was hereafter to be my home.

"As soon as the hurry and confusion were over, I was examined by the captain, who appeared to me to be a very rough, harsh man; indeed, before the day was over I almost repented of the step which I had taken, and when I sat down cold and wet upon some old sails at night, the thoughts of my mother, and what distress I should occasion her, for the first time rushed into my mind, and I wept bitterly; but it was too late then. I have often thought, Mr. Seagrave, that the life of hardship which I have since gone through has been a judgment on me for my cruelty to my mother, in leaving her the way I did. I was her only child, poor woman; she had nothing else to love but me, and it broke her heart; a poor return, Master William, for all her care and kindness! God forgive me!"

Old Ready left off for some little time, and the remainder of the party kept silence. William, who sat next to his mother, turned round to her, and kissed her.

"I like to see you do that, Master William," said Ready; "it tells me that my story is not thrown away upon you, and I look upon that kiss as a seal that you'll never desert your parent." The tear trickled down Mrs. Seagrave's cheek, as she returned her boy's embrace.

"I'll leave off now, if you please," said Ready: "I don't feel inclined to go on; my heart is full when I recall that foolish and wicked deed of mine. Mr. Seagrave," continued Ready, "as it is bed-time, if you please, I'll hand you the Bible. Oblige me by reading that part, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Oh! sir, what comfort there is in that book!"

Mr. Seagrave read the chapter that Ready requested, and finished with a short prayer, after which they all retired to their beds.

TOMMY—WHERE'S THE THIMBLE?

CHAPTER IV.

THE next morning was fine, and as soon as breakfast was over, they took the wheels down to the turtle-pond, and Ready having speared one of the largest by means of a pike with a barb to it, which he had made on purpose, they hauled it on shore, slung it under the wheels, and took it

up to the house. Having killed the turtle, and cut it up, Juno, under the directions of Ready, chose such portions as were required for the soup; and when the pot was on the fire, Ready, Mr. Seagrave, and William, set off with the cross-cut saw and hatchets, to commence felling the cocoa-nut trees for the building of the outhouse, which was to hold their stores, as soon as they could be brought round from the other side of the island.

"I mean this to be our place of refuge in case of danger, sir," observed Ready; "and therefore I have selected this thick part of the wood, as it is not very far from the house, and by cutting the path to it in a zigzag, it will be quite hidden from sight; and we must make the path just wide enough to allow the wheels to pass, and stump up the roots of the trees which we are obliged to cut down, otherwise the stumps would attract attention. Not that I think we shall ever want it; but still it is a precaution which we

may as well take, as it will not give us a great deal of extra labour."

"I agree with you, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave; "there is no saying what may happen."

"You see, sir, between ourselves, it is often the custom for the natives, in this part of the world, to come in their canoes from one island to another, merely to get cocoa-nuts. I can't say that the other islands near us are inhabited, but still it is probable, and we cannot tell what the character of the people may be. I tell you this, but you had better not say a word to Mrs. Seagrave, as it may distress her; Master William, you will not, I am sure."

"Oh no; I would not say any thing to alarm my mother, depend upon it, Ready."

"We are now near the spot, sir. You see, when we have got over this hill, where the trees are so very thick, the fall in the ground will assist in the concealment of the building. I should say we are very near right where we now

stand, sir, for we are two-thirds of the way down the hollow, and we have more than sufficient slope to drain off the water."

"How far are we now from the house, Ready? We must not be too distant."

"I reckon we are not 150 yards in a straight line, although the road will, by its turning, make it double the distance."

"Then I think this spot will do very well; so the sooner we begin the better."

"I'll just mark out the trees which are to stand, Mr. Seagrave, and those which are to be cut down, so as to leave about four feet of stump standing. Master William, will you please to take the other end of the line?"

As soon as they had planned the building, the axes and saw were in full use, and tree after tree fell one upon the other. They worked hard till dinner-time, and were not sorry at the prospect of sitting down to a rich mess of turtle-soup.

"My dear William, and you too, Mr. Seagrave,

how very warm you are," said Mrs. Seagrave; "you must not work so hard."

"Cutting down trees is very warm work, mother," replied William, "and hard work will never hurt any one, especially when he dines off turtle-soup; we are very hungry, and shall do justice to Juno's cooking. Why, Tommy, what's the matter with you?"

"Tommy and I are at variance," replied Mrs. Seagrave. "I had my thimble this morning, and had commenced my sewing, when I was called out by Juno, and Caroline went with me, and Tommy was left in the house. When I came back I found him outside, and on going back to my work, there was no thimble to be found; I asked him if he had touched it, and his answer was that he would look for it. He did look, and said he could not find it; I have asked him several times if he took it away, and his only answer is that he will find it by-and-by. I am certain he has taken it, but he will not say if he has or

has not. The consequence is, that I have done no work the whole morning."

"Tommy, did you take the thimble?" said Mr. Seagrave, gravely.

"I'll find it by-and-by, papa."

"That's not an answer, sir. Did you take the thimble?"

"I'll find it by-and-by, papa," said Tommy, whimpering.

"That's all the answer he will give me," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Well, then, he shall have no dinner till the thimble makes its appearance," replied Mr. Seagrave.

Master Tommy began to cry at this intelligence, Juno appeared with the turtle-soup, the smell of which was very savoury; and Tommy cried louder when they had said grace and commenced their dinner. They were all very hungry, and William sent his plate for another portion, which he had not commenced long before he put his finger in his mouth and pulled out something.

"Why, mother, here's the thimble in my soup," cried William; "I had very nearly swallowed it."

"No wonder he said he would find it by-and-by," said Ready, smiling; "he meant to have fished it up, I suppose, from what was left of the soup after dinner. Well, Mrs. Seagrave, I don't mean to say that Tommy is a good boy, but still, although he would not tell where the thimble was, he has not told a falsehood about it."

"No, he has not." replied William. "I think, now that the thimble is found, if he begs pardon, papa will forgive him."

"Tommy, come here," said Mr. Seagrave. "tell me why you put that thimble into the soup."

"I wanted to taste the soup. I wanted to fill the thimble; the soup burnt my fingers, and I let the thimble drop in."

"Well, a thimbleful wasn't much, at all

events," observed Ready. "And why didn't you tell your mamma where the thimble was?"

"I was afraid mamma throw all the soup away, and then I get none for dinner."

"Oh! that was it, was it? Well, sir, I said you should have no dinner till the thimble was found, so, as it is found, you may have your dinner; but if you ever refuse to answer a question again, I shall punish you more severely."

Tommy was glad the lecture was over, and more glad to get his turtle-soup; he finished one plate, and, as he asked for another, he said, "Tommy won't put thimble in again; put tin pot in next time."

"Massa Tommy, you put nothing in at all," said Juno, who was eating her dinner beside him; "some day you scald yourself all over—little greedy boy."

After dinner they went to their work again, and did not come in again till sunset.

"The clouds are gathering fast, sir," observed Ready; "we shall have rain to-night."

"I fear we shall; but we must expect it now, Ready."

"Yes, sir; and by-and-by we shall have it for days together."

"Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave, "if you are not too much tired, perhaps you will go on with your history."

"Certainly, ma'am, if you wish it," replied Ready. "When I left off, I was on board of the collier, bound to London. We had a very fair wind, and a quick passage. I was very sick until we arrived in the Nore, and then I recovered, and, as you may suppose, was astonished at the busy scene, and the quantity of vessels which were going up and down the river. But I did not like my captain; he was very severe and brutal to the men; and the apprentice who was on board told me to run away, and get into another vessel, and not to

bind myself apprentice to this captain, or I should be beat all day long, and be treated as bad as he was. I knew this was the case, as the captain kicked and cuffed him twenty times a day. The men said that he did not do so to me, for fear I should refuse to be his apprentice; but that, as soon as my indentures were signed, he would treat me in the same way."

"What is the meaning of indentures, papa?" said William.

"When a lad wishes to learn a trade, William, of course it is necessary that he should be taught; and if a lad, as soon as he had learnt his trade, was able to leave the person who taught him, and work for another, of course no tradesman would consent to take a boy and teach him, as he would have all his trouble for nothing. During the first two years that a lad is put to a trade, of course, he is of little or no use to his master; an indenture, therefore, is an agreement

between the tradesman, or party who teaches, and the parents of the lad, the parish, or a magistrate, by which he is bound to serve his master so many years; that, by the work he does at the latter time of his apprenticeship, he may indemnify his master for the expense and trouble which he causes at the commencement. In an indenture the master agrees to supply the apprentice with food, and clothing, and necessaries, during his whole apprenticeship; and the lad agrees to work for his master's benefit for the whole number of years that he is apprenticed: after he has served his apprenticeship, he is then free to work for himself. Boys who are sent to sea are bound apprentices in the same way as boys who are taught a trade on shore."

"Thank you, papa," replied William. "Now, Ready, please to go on."

"Well, sir, I made up my mind that I would not remain in the collier; and, as the captain had gone on shore, I had plenty of time to look about

me. There was a large ship, which was ready to sail, lying in the stream; I spoke to two boys who were at the stairs in her boat, and they told me that they were very comfortable on board, and that the captain wanted two or three apprentices. I went on board with them, and offered myself. The captain asked me a great many questions, and I told him the truth, and why I did not like to remain in the collier. He agreed to take me; and I went on shore with him, signed my indentures, and received from him a sufficient supply of clothes; and, two days afterwards, we sailed for Bombay and China."

"But you wrote to your mother, Ready, did you not?" said William.

"Yes, sir, I did; for the captain desired me to do so, and he put a few lines at the bottom to comfort her; but, unfortunately, sir, the letter, which was sent on shore by the cook, never arrived. Whether he dropped, or forgot it till after the ship sailed, and then tore it up, I do not

know; but, as I found out afterwards, it never did get to her hands."

"It was not your fault, that the letter did not arrive safe," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"No, madam, that was not my fault; the fault had been committed before."

"Don't dwell any more upon that portion of your history, Ready; but tell us what took place after you sailed for the East Indies."

"Be it so, if you please. I certainly was very smart and active for my age, and soon became a great favourite on board, especially with the lady passengers, because I was such a little fellow. We arrived safely at Bombay, where our passengers went on shore, and in three weeks afterwards we sailed down the straits for China. It was war time, and we were very often chased by French privateers; but as we had a good crew and plenty of guns, none of them ventured to attack us, and we got safe to Macao, where we unloaded our cargo and took in teas. We had to wait some

time for a convoy, and then sailed for England. When we were off the Isle of France, the convoy was dispersed in a gale; and three days afterwards, a French frigate bore down upon us, and after exchanging a few broadsides, we were compelled to haul down our colours. A lieutenant was sent on board with forty men, to take charge of us, for we were a very rich prize to them. The captain and most of the crew were taken on board of the frigate, but ten Lascars and the boys were left in the Indiaman, to assist in taking her into the Isle of France, which was at that time in the hands of the French. I thought it hard that I was to go to prison at twelve years old; but I did not care much about it, and very soon I was as gay and merry as ever. We had made the island, and were on a wind beating up to the port, when a vessel was seen to windward, and although I could not understand what the Frenchmen said, I perceived that they were in a great fluster and very busy with their spy-glasses, and Jack Romer,

one of my brother-'prentices who had been three years at sea, said to me, 'I don't think we'll go to prison after all, Ready, for that vessel is an English man-of-war, if I'm not mistaken.' At last she came down within three miles of us, and hoisted English colours and fired a gun. The Frenchmen put the ship before the wind, but it was of no use; the man-of-war came up with us very fast, and then the Frenchmen began to pack up their clothes, together with all the other things which they had collected out of the property of our captain and crew; a shot was fired, which went clean over our heads, and then they left the helm, and Jack Romer went to it, and, with my help, hove the ship up in the wind; a boat came on board and took possession, and so there was one escape, at all events. When the captain of the English frigate heard how the Frenchmen had behaved, he ordered all their baggage to be examined as they came on board, taking away every thing which they had plundered."

"It would have served them right to have taken away their own things in return," said William.

"Yes, Master William, it would have served *them* right; but still it would have been wrong to have done so; by so doing, we should have been as dishonest as they were. The captain did not take away their property, but he put them all down in the fore-hold, which, as prisoners, he was justified in doing. They sent a midshipman as prize-master on board of the vessel, and left all us, who had been taken prisoners by the French, in the vessel, to help to work her into port, as the captain did not wish to part with any more men of his own than was necessary. We soon made sail for England, quite delighted at having escaped a French prison, but, after all, we only exchanged it for a Dutch one."

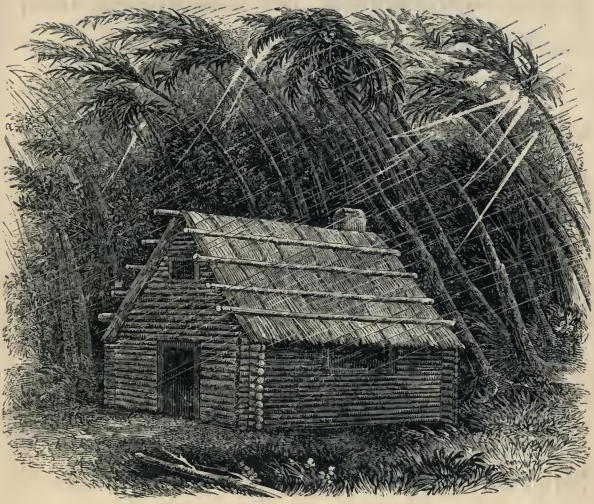
"How do you mean?"

"I mean that, two days afterwards, as we were rounding the Cape, another French vessel bore down upon us, and captured us. This time we

did not find any friend in need, and were taken into Table Bay; for at that time the Cape of Good Hope was in the possession of the Dutch, who, as well as the French, were at war with England."

"How very unfortunate you were, Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Yes, madam, we were, and I can't say much in favour of a Dutch prison. However, I was very young at that time, and did not care much—I had a light heart: but bed-time is come, Miss Caroline is fast asleep, and Master Tommy has been yawning this last half-hour; so I think I had better leave off now, if you please."



HOUSE STRUCK WITH LIGHTNING.

CHAPTER V.

A HEAVY storm came on soon after they had retired to rest; the lightning was so vivid that its flashes penetrated through the chinks of the door and windows, and the thunder burst upon them with a noise which prevented them obtaining any sleep. The children cried and trembled as

they lay in the arms of Mrs. Seagrave and Juno, who were almost as much alarmed themselves.

"This is very awful," said Mr. Seagrave to Ready, for they had both risen from their beds.

"It is indeed, sir; I never knew a more terrible storm than this. I often fancy that the lightning and thunder are as the eye and voice of the Eternal in his wrath."

"Yes, indeed, Ready; it is through the elements that God speaks to man, and that we feel his power. Merciful Heaven!"

As Mr. Seagrave spoke, they were both thrown back half-stunned; a crash of thunder burst over the house, which shook every thing in it; a sulphurous smell pervaded the building, and soon afterwards, when they recovered their feet, they perceived that the house was full of smoke, and they heard the wailing of the women and the shrieks of the children in the bed-places on the other side.

"God have mercy on us!" exclaimed Ready, who was the first to recover himself, and who now attempted to ascertain the injury which had been done: "the lightning has struck us, and I fear that the house is on fire somewhere."

"My wife—my children!" exclaimed Mr. Seagrave; "are they all safe?"

"Yes, yes!" cried Mrs. Seagrave, "all safe; Tommy has come to me, but where is Juno? Juno!"

Juno answered not; William darted to the other side of the house, and found Juno lying on her side, motionless.

"She is dead, father," cried William.

"Help me to carry her out of the house, Mr. Seagrave," said Ready, who had lifted up the poor girl; "she may be only stunned."

They carried Juno out of the house, and laid her on the ground; the rain poured down in torrents.

Ready left them for a minute, to ascertain if

the house was on fire; he found that it had been in flames at the further corner, but the rain had extinguished it. He then went back to Mr. Seagrave and William, who were with Juno.

"I will attend to the girl, sir," said Ready; "go you and Master William into the house; Mrs. Seagrave will be too much frightened if she is left alone at such an awful time. See, sir! Juno is not dead—her chest heaves—she will come to very soon; thank God for it—we could but ill spare the poor girl."

William and Mr. Seagrave returned to the house; they found Mrs. Seagrave fainting with anxiety and fear. The information they brought, that Juno was not killed by the lightning, did much to restore her. William soothed little Albert, and Tommy in a few minutes was fast asleep again in his father's arms. The storm now abated, and as the day began to break, Ready appeared with Juno, who was sufficiently

recovered to be able to walk in with his support; she was put into her bed, and then Ready and Mr. Seagrave went to examine if further mischief had been done. The lightning had come in at the further end of the house, at the part where the fireplace was intended to have been made; they found that it had melted down part of the iron kettle, and, what was a greater loss, that black Nanny, the goat, was killed—the kids were, however, unhurt.

"We have, indeed, been most mercifully preserved," said Mr. Seagrave.

"Yes, sir, thanks be to God for all his goodness," replied Ready. "I thought poor Juno was gone."

"I think we have a large roll of copper wire, Ready; have we not?" said Mr. Seagrave.

"Yes, sir, I was just thinking of it myself; we will have a lightning conductor up the first thing."

"No, Ready; we will return our thanks to

God for our preservation first, and use our human precautions afterwards."

"True, sir, we are bound to do so; and with grateful hearts."

It was now broad daylight. Mrs. Seagrave dressed herself and the children, and as soon as she was ready, Mr. Seagrave read such portions of the Psalms as were appropriate, and they earnestly joined in a prayer of thankfulness and humility. William went out to prepare the breakfast, and Ready procured the coil of copper wire from those stores which were stowed under the bed-places. This he unrolled, and stretched it out straight, and then went for the ladder, which was at the outhouse which they had commenced building. As soon as breakfast was over, Ready and Mr. Seagrave went out again to fix up the lightning conductor, leaving William to do the work of Juno, who still remained fast asleep in her bed.

"I think, sir," said Ready, "that one of those two trees which are close together will suit the best; they are not too near the house, and yet quite near enough for the wire to attract the lightning."

"Yes, I agree with you, Ready; but we must not leave them both standing."

"No, sir, but we shall require them both to get up and fix the wire; after that we will cut down the other."

Ready put his ladder against one of the trees, and taking with him the hammer and a bag of large spike nails, drove one of the nails into the trunk of the tree till it was deep enough in to bear his weight; he then drove in another above it, and so he continued to do, standing upon one of them while he drove in another above, till he had reached the top of the tree, close to the boughs; he then descended, and, leaving the hammer behind him, took up a saw and small axe, and in about ten minutes he had cut off

the head of the cocoa-nut tree, which remained a tall, bare pole.

"Take care, Ready, how you come down," said Mr. Seagrave, anxiously.

"Never fear, sir," replied Ready; "I'm not so young as I was, but I have been too often at the mast-head, much higher than this."

Ready came down again, and then cut down a small pole, to fix, with a thick piece of pointed wire at the top of it, on the head of the cocoa-nut tree. He then went up, lashed the small pole to the head of the tree, made the end of the copper wire fast to the pointed wire, and then he descended. The other tree near to it was then cut down, and the lower end of the wire buried in the ground at the bottom of the tree on which the lightning conductor had been fixed.

"That's a good job done, sir," said Ready, wiping his face, for he was warm with the work.

"Yes," replied Mr. Seagrave; "and we must

put up another near the outhouse, or we may lose our stores."

"Very true, sir."

"You understand this, William; don't you?" said his father.

"O yes, papa; lightning is attracted by metal, and will now strike the point instead of the house, run down the wire, and only tear up the ground below. You explained it to me before."

"Well, and you have not forgot it, Master William," said Ready. "It's coming on again, sir, as thick as ever," observed the old man; "we shall do no work to-day, I'm afraid. I'll just go and see where the stock are; I hope we have lost no more of them. Perhaps you and William will bury the poor goat; you will be able to do that before the storm begins."

Mr. Seagrave and William pulled Nanny out by the legs, and buried her under the lightning conductor. By the time they had finished, Ready returned; he had found the goats and

sheep, and he had brought with him the other goat, which had kidded during the storm.

"The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, sir," said Ready, as he came to them. "I was fearful that we should have nothing to give the poor kids which had lost their mother, but now this goat can rear them all four. It will be rather hard upon her, but she must do it; we will feed her well, at all events."

Ready led in the other goat and put her in the same place where Black Nanny had been, and then they sat down to dinner. Juno was now up again, and said that she was quite well, with the exception of a headache. As Ready had predicted, the rain now came on again with great violence, and it was impossible to do any work out of doors. At the request of William he continued his narrative.

Narrative of Old Ready.

"Well, Master William, as soon as they had let go their anchor in Table Bay, we were all or-

dered on shore, and sent up to a prison close to the Government Gardens. We were not very carefully watched, as it appeared impossible for us to get away, and I must say we were well treated in every respect; but we were told that we should be sent to Holland in the first man-of-war which came into the bay, and we did not much like the idea.

"There were, as I told you, some other boys as well as myself, who belonged to the Indiaman, and we kept very much together, not only because we were more of an age, but because we had been shipmates so long. Two of these boys, one of whom I have mentioned as Jack Romer, and the other Will Hastings, were my particular friends; and one day, as we were sitting under the wall warming ourselves, for it was winter time, Romer said, 'How very easy it would be for us to get away, if we only knew where to go to.' 'Yes,' replied Hastings, 'but where are we to go to, if it is not to the Hottentots and wild sa-

vages; and when we get there, what can we do? —we can't get any farther.' 'Well,' said I, 'I would rather be living free among savages, than be shut up in a prison.' That was our first talk on the subject, but we had many others afterwards; and as the one or two Dutch soldiers who stood sentry spoke English, and we could talk a little Dutch, we obtained a good deal of information from them; for they had very often been sent to the frontiers of the colony. We continued to ask questions, and to talk among ourselves for about two months, and at last we resolved that we would make our escape. Now, you see, Master William, this was a very foolish business, and shews how unfit boys are to judge for themselves: we were only running into hardship and danger, without the slightest chance of our escaping. We should have done much better if we had remained where we were; but there is no putting old heads upon young shoulders. We saved up our provisions, bought some

long Dutch knives, tied our few clothes up in bundles, and one dark night we contrived to remain in the yard without being perceived, when the prisoners were locked up; and raising a long pole, which lay in the yard, to the top of the wall, with a good deal of scrambling we contrived to get over it, and made off as fast as we could for the Table Mountain."

ESCAPING FROM PRISON.

"What was your reason for going there, Ready?"

"Why, Hastings, who was the oldest, and, I will say, the sharpest of the three, said that we had better stay up there for a few days, till we had made up our minds what to do, and try if we could not procure a musket or two, and ammunition; for, you see, we had money, as, when the Indiaman was first taken, the captain divided a keg of rupees, which was on board, among the officers and men, in proportion to the wages due to them, thinking it was better for the crew to have the money than to leave it for the Frenchmen; and we had spent very little while in prison, for spirits were not allowed, and we boys had not begun to chew tobacco, or smoke. There was also another reason why he persuaded us to go to the Table Mountain, which was, that as soon as our escape was found out, they would send parties to look for us; thinking, of course, that we had made for the interior; and we should

have less chance of being retaken if we travelled after the first search was over. The soldiers had told us of the lions, and other wild animals, and how dangerous it was to travel, and Hastings said, that not finding us, they would suppose we had been destroyed by the wild beasts, and would not look for us any more. You see we had some sort of calculation, although we were foolish boys."

"Foolish indeed," observed Mrs. Seagrave, "to set off you knew not where, in a country full of wild beasts and savages."

"True enough, madam," replied Ready; "and now I will tell you what happened to us ere we were three hours on our journey. We ran at first until we were out of breath, and then we walked on as fast as we could—not going right up the mountain, but keeping a slanting direction to the south-west, so as to get away from the town, and more towards False Bay; you recollect I shewed you that bay, Master William, as we passed the Cape of Good Hope."

"Yes, I remember, Ready."

"We had walked about four hours, and began to feel very tired when the day dawned, and then we looked out for a place to conceal ourselves in. We soon found a cave with a narrow entrance, large enough inside to hold half-a-dozen of such lads as we were, and we crawled in. It was quite dry, and, as we were very tired, we lay down with our heads on our bundles, intending to take a nap; but we had hardly made ourselves comfortable and shut our eyes, when we heard such a screaming and barking, that we were frightened out of our lives almost. We could not think what it could be. At last Hastings peeped out, and began to laugh; so Romer and I looked out also, and there we saw about one hundred and fifty large baboons, leaping and tumbling about in such a way as I never saw; they were bigger than we were—indeed, when they stood on their hind-legs they were much taller, and they had very large white tusks. Some of them were females,

with young ones on their backs, and they were just as active as the males. At last they played such antics, that we all burst out into a loud laugh, and we had not ceased when we found the grinning face of one of the largest of those brutes close to our own. He had dropped from the rock above us, like magic. We all three backed into the cave, very much frightened, for the teeth of the animal were enormous, and he looked very savage. He gave a shrill cry, and we perceived all the rest of the herd coming to him as fast as they could. I said that the cave was large enough to hold six of us; but there was a sort of inner cave which we had not gone into, as the entrance was much smaller. Romer cried out, 'Let us go into the inside cave—we can get in one by one;' and he backed in; Hastings followed with his bundle, and I hurried in after him just in time; for the baboons, who had been chattering to each other for half a minute, came into the outer cave just as I crawled into the inner. Five

or six of them came in, all males, and very large. The first thing they did was to lay hold of Romer's bundle, which they soon opened—at once they seized his provisions and rammed them into their pouches, and then they pulled out the other things and tore them all to pieces.

BABOONS IN THE CAVE.

As soon as they had done with the bundle, two of them came towards the inner cave and saw us.

One put his long paw in to seize us; but Hastings gave him a slash with his knife, and the animal took his paw out again fast enough. It was laughable to see him hold out his hand to the others, and then taste the blood with the tip of his tongue, and such a chattering I never heard —they were evidently very angry, and more came into the cave and joined them; then another put in his hand, and received a cut just as before. At last, two or three at once tried to pull us out, but we beat them all off with our knives, wounding them all very severely. For about an hour they continued their attempts and then they went away out of the cave, but remained at the mouth, shrieking and howling. We began to be very tired of this work, and Romer said that he wished he was back in prison again; and so did I, I can assure you; but there was no getting out, for had we gone out the animals would have torn us to pieces. We agreed that we had no chance but the animals becoming tired and going away; and

most anxious we were, for the excitement had made us very thirsty, and we wanted water. We remained for two hours in this way imprisoned by baboons, when all of a sudden a shrill cry was given by one of the animals, and the whole herd went galloping off as fast as they could, screaming louder than ever. We waited for a short time to see if they would return, and then Hastings crawled out first, and looking out of the cave very cautiously, said that they were all gone, and that he could see nothing but a Hottentot sitting down watching some cattle which were browsing; we therefore all came out, very happy at our release. That was our first adventure, Master William; we had plenty afterwards; but I think it is now time we should go to bed. It is my opinion we shall have a fine day to-morrow, sir; but there's no saying."

"I do so want to hear what happened to you afterwards, Ready," said William.

"Well, so you shall, sir; but there's a time for

every thing, and this is bed-time, unless you like to go with me, Master William; the weather has cleared up, and I want to catch a fish or two for to-morrow."

"Yes, I will, Ready, for I'm not at all tired."

"Well then, here are the lines: good night, madam; good night, Mr. Seagrave."

JUNO PRAYING.

CHAPTER VI.

As Ready had predicted, the weather set in fine for several days after the violent storm of which we have made mention. Juno was weak, and suffering for some time. She had been struck down by the lightning, but she was able to cook the dinner and do light work. Poor Juno ap-

peared to be very sensible of the wonderful preservation which she had had from the lightning. She had always been a good girl, and attentive whenever the Bible was read, but now she did not appear to think that the usual morning and evening services were sufficient to express her gratitude, and several times when Ready went out first in the morning, he had perceived Juno kneeling down under a cocoa-nut tree, secretly and devoutly returning thanks for having been so mercifully spared. Ready, of course, did not appear to notice her, but he said more than once to himself as he walked away, "There's more good under that dark skin than under many a white one, and her prayers are as acceptable to the Most High as those of kings and princes."

For a fortnight, with little intermission, the weather was fine, and during that time, Ready, Mr. Seagrave, and William worked from daylight till dusk at the storehouse, which they were so anxious to complete, and were so tired when

their work was over, that even William did not ask Ready to go on with his history. At last the storehouse was complete, thatched and wattled in on three sides, leaving one open for ventilation; the lower part, which had been arranged for the folding of the stock at night and during the rainy season, was also wattled in with cocoa-nut boughs on three sides, and made a very comfortable retreat for the animals. The winding path to the storehouse was also cut through the cocoa-nut grove, but the stumps were not removed, as they could not spare the time. All the stores that they had brought round were put into the storehouse, and they were now ready to take up some other job. It was, however, agreed that, on the day after the building was finished, they should all have a day's holiday, which they certainly did require. William caught some fish, a turtle was speared and wheeled up to the house; and they not only had a holiday, but a feast. Mr. Seagrave and William had been walking on the

beach with Mrs. Seagrave and the children, while Ready was assisting Juno in cutting up the turtle; they had shewn Mrs. Seagrave the storehouse, and the goats with the four kids had been led there, as there was no longer any occasion for them to remain in the house. The weather was beautiful, and they agreed to go and examine the garden. They found that the seeds had not yet commenced sprouting, notwithstanding the heavy rains.

"I should have thought that so much rain would have made them come up," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"No, my dear," replied Mr. Seagrave; "they require more of the sun than they will have till the rainy season is nearly over; a few days like this, and they will soon be above ground."

"Let us sit down on this knoll, it is quite dry," said Mrs. Seagrave. "I little thought," continued she, taking Mr. Seagrave's hand after she was seated, "that I could have been so happy in a

desert island. How fast the time flies. I thought I should feel the loss of books very severely, but I really do not think that I could have found time to read."

"Employment is a source of happiness, especially when you are usefully employed. An industrious person is always a happy person, provided he is not obliged to work too hard; and even where you have cause for unhappiness, nothing makes you forget it so soon as occupation. I really believe that an idle person is never truly happy, and that too much work is preferable to having nothing whatever to do."

"But, mamma, we shall not always have so much to do as we have now," said William.

"Of course not," replied Mr. Seagrave; "and then we shall find our books a great source of enjoyment. I am anxious to go to the other side of the island, and see what have been spared to us, and whether they have been much damaged;

but that cannot be until after the rains are over; and we can use the boat again."

"What are you about, Tommy?"

"I'm killing little beetles," replied Tommy; "I kill plenty."

"But why should you kill them, Tommy?—they don't hurt you."

"I don't like beetles."

"That's not a reason, Tommy; you must not kill whatever you don't like. If they bite you, or sting you, then you may destroy them; but it is very cruel to kill animals when there is no occasion. Who made those beetles, Tommy? Who made every thing?"

"God," replied Tommy after a little while.

"Yes, God made them, and intended them to live out their short lives; he made all creatures, and he gave them to us for our use, but not to abuse his goodness, by wantonly destroying them. Do you understand me, Tommy?"

"Juno kills flies," replied Tommy.

"Yes, because it is sometimes necessary; but she does not kill them merely because she has nothing else to do: remember what I have said to you, Tommy. We may well remember that they are God's creatures, my dear boy," said Mr. Seagrave, turning to William: "look at this minute insect which is crawling on my finger; what a number of legs it has!"

"Yes, I have seen something like it in old books. How fast it runs with its little legs; thinner than hairs—how wonderful!"

"Yes, William," replied Mr. Seagrave, "we have only to examine into any portion, however small, of creation, and we are immediately filled with wonder; we have only to look around us, wherever we may be, and we have food for contemplation. There is nothing which points out to us the immensity and the omniscience of the Almighty more than the careful provision which has been made by Him for the smallest and most insignificant of created beings. This little animal

is perhaps one of many millions, who have their term of existence, and their enjoyment, as well as we have. What is it?—an insect of the minutest kind, a nothing in creation; yet has the same care been bestowed upon its formation: these little legs, hardly visible, have their muscles and their sinews; and every other portion of its body is as complete, as fearfully and wonderfully fashioned as our own. Such is His will; and what insects we ought to feel ourselves, when compared to the God of power and of love!"

"Let me also point out to you, William," continued Mr. Seagrave, "the infinity of His creative power, displayed in endless variety, perceptible even in objects of the same nature, and to careless eyes of the same form and mould. Amongst the millions of men that have been born, and died, never yet were there seen two faces or two bodies exactly alike; nay, if you could examine the leaves upon the trees, although there may be millions upon millions in a forest, you could not

discover two leaves of precisely the same form and make."

"I believe not," replied William, "I have often tried in vain; yet some animals are so much alike, that I cannot perceive any difference between them—sheep, for instance."

"Very true; *you* cannot tell the difference, because you have not examined them; but a shepherd, if he has seven hundred sheep under his care, will know every one of them from the others; which proves that there must be a great difference between them, although not perceptible to the casual observer; and the same, no doubt, is the case with all other classes of animals. In every thing made, His variety is infinite.

"And observe again, my dear William, what effect of human ingenuity can approach to the perfection of structure, in the simplest formation by the Almighty hand. Look at this small flower; examine the beauty of its colour and form; consider the lavish profusion with which myriads of such

flowers spring up to adorn the earth, and yet how matchless! Does not our Redeemer beautifully point it out, where he says, 'Consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.'"

"Yes, Master William," observed Ready; "I have often wondered over the things that I have seen, and I have even in my ignorance felt what your papa has now told you; and it has brought into my mind the words of Job: 'When I consider, I am afraid of him.'"

"Papa," said William, after a pause in the conversation, "you have referred to the variety—the wonderful variety—shewn in the works of the Deity. Tell me some other prominent feature in creation."

"One of the most remarkable in creation, William, is order."

"Point out to me, papa, where and in what that quality is most observable."

"Everywhere and in every thing, my dear boy; whether we cast our eyes up to the heavens above us, or penetrate into the bowels of the earth, the principle of order is everywhere—every thing is governed by fixed laws, which cannot be disobeyed: we have order in the seasons, in the tides, in the movement of the heavenly bodies, in the instinct of animals, in the duration of life assigned to each; from the elephant who lives more than a century, to the ephemeral fly, whose whole existence is limited to an hour.

"Inanimate nature is subject to the same unvarying laws. Metals, and rocks, and earths, and all the mineral kingdom, follow one law in their crystallization, never varying from the form assigned to them; each atom depositing itself in the allotted place, until that form is complete: we have order in production, order in decay; but all is simple to Him by whom the planets were thrown out into space, and were commanded to roll in their eternal orbits."

"I never do look up on a starry night without feeling inclined to pray," said William. "The stars in the heavens are beautiful, but they are not placed there in order."

"The fixed stars do not appear to us to be in order—that is, they do not stud the heavens at equal distances from each other as we view them; but you must recollect that they are at very different distances from this earth, spreading over an infinity of space; and we have reason to suppose that this our earth is but a mere unit in the multitude of created worlds, only one single portion of an infinite whole. As the stars now appear to us, they are useful to the mariner, enabling him to cross the trackless seas; and to the astronomer, who calculates the times and seasons. Depend upon it, William, it is for wise reasons that we view the stars as we now do, so profusely scattered in the heavens."

"What do you mean, papa, by saying that

this world of ours is supposed to be but one of a multitude of created worlds?"

"William, our little knowledge is bounded to this our own earth, which we have ascertained very satisfactorily to be but one of several planets revolving round our own sun. I say our own sun, because we have every reason to suppose that each of those fixed stars, and myriads now not visible to the naked eye, are all suns, bright and glorious as our own, and of course throwing light and heat upon unseen planets revolving round them. Does not this give you some idea of the vastness, the power, and the immensity of God?"

"One almost loses oneself in the imagination," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Yes, dearest," replied Mr. Seagrave; "and it has been surmised by some, who have felt in their hearts the magnificence of the Great Architect, that there must be some point of view in space where all those glorious suns, which seem

to us confused in the heavens above us, will appear all symmetrically arranged, will *there* be viewed in regular order, whirling round in one stupendous and perfect system of beauty and design; and where can that be, if it is not in that heaven which we hope to gain?"

There was a silence for a few moments, when William said, "They say that there are people who are atheists, papa. How can they be so if they only look around them? I'm sure a mere examination of the works of God ought to make them good Christians."

"No, my child," replied Mr. Seagrave; "there you are in error. Few deny the existence of a Deity, and an examination of his works may make them good and devout men, but not Christians. There are good men to be found under every denomination, whether they be Jews, Mahomedans, or Pagans; but they are not Christians."

"Very true, papa."

"Faith in things seen, if I may use the term,

my dear child—faith produced by an examination of the works of creation—may induce men to acknowledge the power and goodness of the Almighty, but it will not make them wise to salvation; for that end, it is necessary, as the Apostle saith, to have faith in things not seen. There is little merit in acknowledging what is evident to our senses: the faith required of us as Christians, and to which are attached the great and gracious promises of the Gospel, is faith in a sublime, and to us, incomprehensible mystery—the incarnation of the Son of God, who descended upon earth and took the form of man, and actually suffered for our redemption. Still the examination of the works of God will always produce an effect, which, by the divine blessing, may tend eventually to make those Christians who as yet are not so. The visible works of the Creator prove beyond all doubt his stupendous power and his overflowing love; and once convinced of these, we ought to be better prepared to receive

those tenets of a Christian's faith, which are to us incomprehensible, but which nothing but his love to us would have suggested. What saith the Apostle? 'Herein is love—not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'"

STACKING FUEL.

CHAPTER VII.

"Well, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave, "after breakfast, which is to be our next job?"

"Why, sir, I think we had better all set to, to collect the branches and ends of the cocoa-nut trees cut down, and stack them for fuel; Master Tommy and Juno have already made a good

large pile, and I think, by to-night, we shall have made the stack, and so arranged it, that the rain will not get into it much. After that, as the weather will not permit us to leave the house for any time, we will cut our salt-pan and make our fish-pond; they will take a week at least, and then we shall have little more to do near home. I think the strength of the rains is over already, and perhaps in a fortnight we may venture to walk through the wood, and examine what we have saved from the wreck; we shall have plenty to do in sorting and preparing the different articles before the fine weather returns, and we can then bring them round in the boat and fill our storehouse."

"And we are to explore the island; are we not, Ready?" said William. "I long to do that."

"Yes, Master William, but that must be almost the last job; for we shall be away for two or three nights, perhaps, and we must look out for

fine weather. We will, however, do that before we bring the stores round in the boat."

"But how are we to make the salt-pan, Ready? We must cut it out of the solid rock."

"Yes, Master William; but I have three or four of what they call cold chisels—those short, thick pieces of iron, with one end sharpened, which are in the storehouse—and with one of them and a hammer, we shall get on faster than you think; for the coral rock, although hard at the surface, is very soft a little below it."

The whole of that day was employed in piling up the cocoa-nut branches and wood. Ready made a square stack, like a haystack, with a gable top, over which he tied the long branches, so that the rain would pour off it.

"There," said Ready, as he came down the ladder, "that will be our provision for next year; we have quite enough left to go on with till the rainy season is over, and we shall have no difficulty in collecting it afterwards when

the weather is dry; this must be kept for the next rainy season."

Mr. Seagrave sighed and looked grave; Ready observed it, and said, "Mr. Seagrave, it is not that we may want it; but still we must prepare for the next rainy season, in case we do want it. That Captain Osborne, if he lives, will send to look for us, I have no doubt; nay, I believe that Mackintosh will do the same; but still you must not forget that they all may have perished, although we have been so mercifully preserved. A small boat has a poor chance when it has to run many hundred miles in the open sea; and if they should have perished, we may remain here for years before we are discovered. We must put our trust in God, sir."

"We must, Ready; and if it is his will, we must not murmur. I have schooled myself as much as possible; but thoughts will come, in spite of my endeavours to restrain them."

"Of course they will, sir; that's natural: however, sir, you must hope for the best; fretting is no good, and it is sinful."

"I feel it is, Ready; and when I see how patient, and even happy, my wife is under such privations, I am angry with myself."

"A woman, sir, bears adversity better than a man. A woman is all love, and if she has but her husband and children with her, and in good health, she will make herself happy almost anywhere: but men are different: they cannot bear being shut out of the world as you are now; although perhaps they would be happier for not being mixed up with it, if they could only think so."

"It is our ambition which makes us unhappy, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave; "but let us say no more about it: God must dispose of me as he thinks fit. The sun has set; let us go home: come, William."

After supper, Ready, being requested by William, continued his narrative:—

"I left off, if I recollect right, Master William, just as the Hottentot, with the cattle under his care, had frightened away the baboons who were tormenting us. Well, sir, we came out of the cave and sat down under the rock, so that the Hottentot could not see us, and we had a sort of council of war. Romer was for going back and giving ourselves up again; for he said it was ridiculous to be wandering about, without any arms to defend ourselves against wild beasts, and that we might fall in with something worse than the baboons very soon; and he was right. It would have been the wisest thing which we could have done; but Hastings said, that if we went back we should be laughed at, and the idea of being laughed at made us all agree that we would not. You see, Master William, the fear of being laughed at is the occasion of not only boys, but even men, doing very foolish things. We had done wrong, and we would not do right because we were afraid of ridicule; in fact, we were deter-

mined to risk our lives and run into any danger and hardship, because we could not bear to be laughed at for our folly, as we deserved to be. Bear this in mind, Master William, and never let the fear of ridicule induce you to do what is wrong; or if you have done wrong, prevent you from returning to what is your duty."

"Many thanks for your advice, Ready; I hope William will not forget it," said Mr. Seagrave; "more people are laughed into error than persuaded into it."

"Well, sir, such was our reason for not giving up our mad scheme; and having so decided, the next point of consultation between us was, how we were to procure arms and ammunition, which we could not do without. As we were talking this over, I peeped from behind the rock, to see where the Hottentot might be; I perceived that he had laid himself down, and wrapped himself up in his kross, a mantle of sheep-skins which they always wear. Now we had observed that he carried his

musket in his hand, when we first saw him, as the Hottentots always go out armed, and I pointed out to Hastings and Romer, that if he was asleep, we might get possession of his musket without his perceiving it. This was a good idea, and Hastings said he would crawl to him on his hands and knees, while we remained behind the rock. He did so very cautiously, and found the man's head covered up in his kross and fast asleep; so there was no fear, for the Hottentots are very hard to wake at any time; that we knew well. Hastings first took the musket and carried it away out of the reach of the Hottentot, and then he returned to him, cut the leather thong which slung his powder-horn and ammunition, and retreated with all of them without disturbing the man from his sleep. We were quite overjoyed at this piece of good luck, and determined to walk very cautiously some distance from where the Hottentot lay, that in case he awoke, he should not see us. Keeping our eyes about in every

direction, lest we should meet with anybody else, we proceeded nearly a mile towards Table Bay, when we fell in with a stream of water. This was another happy discovery, for we were very thirsty; so we concealed ourselves near to the stream after we had quenched our thirst, and made a dinner off the provisions we had brought with us."

"But, Ready, did you not do wrong to steal the Hottentot's musket?"

"No, Master William; in that instance it could not be considered as a theft. We were in an enemy's country, trying to escape; we were therefore just as much at war with the country as we were when they took us prisoners, and we no more stole the musket than they could be said to have stolen our ship. Am I not right, Mr. Seagrave?"

"I think so: when two nations are at war, the property of either, when taken, is confiscated. In your position, you were justified in

appropriating any property you might get hold of, which would further your attempts to escape; although I should not think you would have been morally justified if you had murdered and robbed, or even robbed wantonly."

"Exactly so; but, in attempting our escape, had it been necessary to have either surrendered ourselves as prisoners again, or have taken the life of those who would have made us captives, we should have been justified in killing the parties."

"I believe you are justified in what may seem extreme acts, for the recovery of your liberty, after you have been made prisoners. It has always been so considered."

"Well, sir, to go on: we waited till dusk, and then we continued our march towards False Bay as fast as we could. We knew that there were farmers down in the valley, or rather the sides of the hills, and we hoped to obtain, by some means or other, two more muskets. It was

near twelve o'clock at night, with a bright moon, when we had a sight of the water in False Bay, and soon afterwards we heard the baying of a large dog, and not far from us we distinguished two or three farmhouses, with their cattle-folds and orchards. We then looked for a hiding-place, where we might remain till the morning; we found one between some large pieces of rock. We agreed that one should watch while the other two slept; this Hastings undertook to do, as he was not inclined to sleep. At day-light he woke Romer and me, and we made our breakfast. From the place we were concealed in, we had a bird's eye view of the farmhouse, and of what was going on.

"The farmhouse and buildings just below us were much smaller than the other two, which were more distant. We watched the people as they went about. In about an hour the Hottentots came out, and we perceived that they were yoking the oxen to the waggon; they yoked

twelve pair, and then the Hottentot driver got in and drove off towards Cape Town, accompanied by a Hottentot lad and the big dog. Soon after that, another Hottentot drove the cows up the valley to feed; and then a Dutch-woman came out of the house with two children, and fed the poultry.

WATCHING THE FARMHOUSE FROM THE HILL.

"We watched for another hour, and then the

farmer himself made his appearance, with a pipe in his mouth, and sat down on a bench. When his pipe was out, he called to the house, and a Hottentot woman came to him with more tobacco and a light. During the whole of the day, we did not see any other people about the house, so we concluded that there were no more than the farmer, his wife, the Hottentot woman, and two children. About two hours after noon the farmer went to the stable and led out his horse, mounted, and rode away; we saw him speak to the Hottentot woman when he rode off, and she soon after went down the valley with a basket on her head, and a long knife in her hand. Then Hastings said it was time that we moved, for there was but one woman in the house, and we could easily overpower her and get what we wanted; still there was a great risk, as she might give the alarm, and we should have to escape in the day-time, and might be seen and taken prisoners again. However, as

it was our only chance, we resolved to go down to the farmhouse very cautiously, and be all ready to seize any opportunity. We crept down the hill, and gained the fence, which was at the back of the farmhouse, without being discovered: we remained there for about a quarter of an hour, when, to our great joy, we observed the farmer's wife go out of the house, leading a child in each hand; apparently she was going to visit one of her neighbours, for she went in the direction of one of the other farms. As soon as she was a hundred yards off, Hastings crept softly through the fence, and entered the farmhouse by the back door; he came out again, and made a sign for us to come in. We found him already in possession of a rifle and a musket, which had been hanging over the fire-place, and we soon handed down the powder-horns and ammunition pouches, which were hung up at a different part of the room, away from the fire-place.

"Having gained these, Hastings set me to watch at the front door, lest anybody should return, while Romer and he looked out for something else in the way of provisions. We got possession of three hams, and a large loaf of bread as big as a small washing-tub. With these articles we made our way safe back to our retreat. We then looked round, and could see nobody in any direction, so we presumed that we were not discovered. As there was a sort of ravine full of rocks dividing the hill, which we were obliged to pass before we could get into the valley, unless we went down close to the farmhouse, we agreed that it would be better at once to cross it during the day-time, so that we should get that difficulty over, and, at the same time, be further from the farmhouse. We did so; and found a very secure hiding-place, where we lay down, waiting for the sun to set before we started on our journey into the interior. We had not been there an hour, before we heard the shrill cry of our

friends, the baboons, on the hill which we had left; and, after that, we perceived them going down towards the farmhouse, and very busy taking the fruit out of the orchard, throwing it from one to the other as fast as they could; for, you see, these cunning animals had found out that the coast was clear, and did not lose so good an opportunity. They were still busy with their work, when the Hottentot came in sight with the cows; and when he approached the farmhouse, they all gave a loud scream, and scampered off as fast as they could. Then, the Dutchwoman was seen coming back, and when she had gone into the house, and spoken to the Hottentot, we heard her crying, as she came out again by the back door. About an hour before dusk, the Dutch farmer came home on horseback, and, in a few minutes, we knew, by the shrieking and screams, that he was beating his wife: for you see, sir (that is, we suppose it was so), by her leaving the house, the baboons had ventured to

rob the orchard; and I have no doubt it was taken for granted that they had carried off the different articles missing in the house; for they will take any thing; so if it was unfortunate for the poor woman, it was very lucky for us, as it removed the suspicion of our being there, and occasioned no search after us; so we quite forgave the baboons all the annoyance they had given us in the morning, in consequence of the good turn they had done us in the evening. I think I had better leave off now, Master William, as it is getting late."

FISH-POND.

CHAPTER VIII.

The fish-pond was commenced the next morning. Ready, Mr. Seagrave, and William, went down together to the beach, and, after much examination, chose a spot about one hundred yards from the turtle-pond, as most eligible for the purpose; the water being shallow, so that at the part

farthest from the shore there would not be more than three feet.

"Now, sir," said Ready, "this is a very simple job; all we have to do is, to collect small rocks and stones, pile them up wall-fashion inside, and with a slope outside, so as to break the force of the waves when the water is a little rough: of course, the water will find its way through the stones, and will be constantly changed. It's very true, that we can at most times catch fish when we want them, but it is not always that we can spare the time, so it's just as well to have always a certain quantity at hand, to take out at a moment's warning; and we can, of course, catch them and put them in here when we have nothing else to do. Juno will be able to come down and take them out with a spear, when we are away and she wants something for dinner. There's nothing like having a ready supply of provisions at all times."

"But there are few stones about here, Ready;

we shall have to fetch them a long way," said William.

"Well, then, Master William, let us get the wheels down here, and then we can carry a quantity at a time."

"But how shall we carry them, Ready?"

"We will sling a tub on the axle; I will go up and get that ready and bring it down; in the meantime, you and Mr. Seagrave can collect all the stones which are near at hand."

Ready soon returned with the wheels, and the tub slung with rope on the axle, and by that means they found that they could collect the stones very fast; Mr. Seagrave and William bringing them, and Ready in the water, building up the wall.

"We have quite forgot another job which we must put in hand, sir," observed Ready; "but the fish-pond reminds me of it."

"What is that, Ready?"

"A bathing place for the children, and indeed

for us all; we shall want it when the hot weather comes on, but we will put it off till then. I can tell you, sir, that although I don't mind building this wall in the shallow water, I shall be very careful when the water is up to my knees, for you don't know how bold the sharks are in these latitudes. When I was at St. Helena, not very long ago, we had a melancholy proof of it."

"Tell us the story, Ready."

"Why, sir, I could not have believed it possible. I did know an instance, something of the kind, when I was in the East Indies; but that was not a shark, but an alligator. A Dutchman, at Trincomalee, was standing on the beach, fishing in the harbour; an alligator swam right up to him, till his snout was within two feet of him; but the Dutchman being on shore, did not care for him, when all of a sudden, the alligator turned short round in the water, and in so doing, with his tail, he tripped up the Dutchman and threw him into

the water, and then laid hold of him, and dived down."

"Well, but a shark could not do that; could he?"

"Yes, sir. Two soldiers were standing on the rocks at St. Helena; the rocks were out of the water, but the swell just broke over them. Two sharks swam up to them in the same way as the alligator did, and one of them, with a blow of his tail, turning round the same way, tripped one of them off into the water, which was very deep. His comrade was very much frightened and ran to the barracks to tell the story. About a week afterwards, a schooner was in Sandy Bay, on the other side of the island, and the people seeing a very large shark under the stern, put out a hook with a piece of pork, and caught him; they opened him, and found inside of him, to their horror, the whole of the body of the soldier, except the legs below the knees: the monster had swallowed him whole, with the exception of his legs, which had

been nipped off when it closed its jaws. I saw the maw and the back-bone of the animal at the barracks, and it certainly was the largest brute of the kind that I ever witnessed in my life."

"I really had no idea that they were so bold, Ready."

"It is a fact, I assure you, sir; and therefore we cannot be too careful how we go into the water: you saw how soon the poor pig was dispatched."

"I wonder how the pigs get on, Ready," said William.

"I dare say they have littered by this time, sir; they have no want of food."

"But can they eat the cocoa-nuts?"

"Not the old ones, but they can the young ones, which are constantly dropping from the trees, and then there's plenty of roots for them. If we stay long here we shall soon have good sport hunting them; but we must be very careful, Master William; for although they were tame

pigs when we brought them on shore, they will be wild and very savage in a very short time. A wild boar is a formidable animal."

"So I believe," said Mr. Seagrave: "how must we hunt them?"

"Why, sir, with the dogs, and then shoot them. I am glad that Vixen is to pup soon; we shall want more dogs."

"I am afraid that we shall have more mouths than we can find food for."

"Never fear that, sir, as long as we have the sea to fish in. Dogs live very well upon fish, even if it is raw; in the northern climes they get little else."

"We shall have some lambs soon, Ready; shall we not?"

"Yes, sir, I expect very soon. I wish we had more food for the animals: they are put rather hard to it just now; but next year, if we find more food on the island, we must keep the grass near home, to make hay and stack it for the win-

ter time—or the rainy season rather, for there is no winter in these latitudes. I'm pretty sure we shall find some clear land on the south of the island, for the cocoa-nut grove does not extend so close to the water on that side as it does on the north."

"I do so long to go on our exploring party," said William.

"We must wait a little, sir," replied Ready; "but I don't know whether you will go; we must not all three go at once, and leave Mrs. Seagrave alone."

"No," replied Mr. Seagrave, "that would not be fair; either you or I must remain, William."

William made no reply, but it was evident that he was annoyed at the idea of not being of the party. They worked very hard that day, and the walls rose fast out of the water. At sunset they broke off and returned to the house.

After supper, Ready continued his narrative. "We remained concealed until it was dark, and

then Hastings and Romer, each with a musket on his shoulders and a ham at his back; and I, being the smallest, with the rifle and the great loaf of bread, which was slung to me by a string passing through a hole bored through the middle, set off on our journey. Our intention was to travel north, as we knew that was the road leading from the colony; but Hastings had decided that we should first go to the eastward, so as to make what we sailors call a circumbendibus, which would keep us out of the general track. We passed through the deep sands of False Bay, and after that gradually ascended, getting among brushwood and young trees; but we saw no signs of cultivation, nor did we pass one house after we had left False Bay astern of us. About twelve o'clock we were very much fatigued, and longed for a drink of water, but we did not find any, although the moon shone as bright as day. We distinctly heard, however, what we did not much like, the howling and cries of the wild beasts,

which increased as we went on ; still we did not see any, and that was our comfort. At last we were so tired that we all sat down on the ledge of a rock. We dared not go to sleep, so we remained there till daylight, listening to the howling of the animals. We none of us spoke, and I presume that Hastings' and Romer's thoughts were the same as my own, which were, that I would have given a great deal to find myself safe and sound again within the prison walls. However, daylight came at last ; the wild beasts did not prowl any more ; we walked on till we found a stream of water, where we sat down and took our breakfast, after which our courage revived, and we talked and laughed as we walked on, just as we had done before. We now began to ascend the mountains, which Hastings said must be the Swartz or Black Mountains that the soldiers had talked to us about—they might be for all I knew, but they were very desolate; and when night came on we collected brushwood, and cut down

branches with our large knives, that we might make a fire, not only to warm ourselves, but to scare away the wild beasts, whose howling had already commenced. We saw two or three during the day-time sunning themselves on the flat rocks —one was a panther; we had loaded our guns: as we passed, it shewed its white teeth, but did not move; the others were too far off for us to distinguish what they were. We lighted our fire and ate our supper; the loaf was half gone, and the hams had been well cut into—we knew, therefore, that very soon we should have to trust to our guns for procuring food. As soon as we had finished our meal, we lay down by the fire, with our muskets loaded close to us, and our ammunition placed out of danger. We were so tired, that we were soon fast asleep. It had been agreed that Romer should keep the first watch, and Hastings the middle, and I the morning; but Romer fell asleep, and the consequence was, that the fire was not kept up. It was about midnight that I

was awakened by something breathing hard in my face, and just as I could recal my senses and open my eyes, I found myself lifted up by my waistband, and the teeth of some animal pinching my flesh. I tried to catch at my mus-

HYENA LIFTING READY.

ket, but I put out my wrong hand, and laid hold of a still lighted brand out of the fire, which I

darted into the animal's face; it let me drop directly, and ran away."

"What a providential escape!" said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Yes, it was, ma'am; the animal was a hyena. Fortunately they are a very cowardly sort of beast; still, had it not been for the lighted stick, it would have carried me off, for I was very small then, and it lifted me up as if I was a feather in its mouth. The shout I gave woke Hastings, who seized his musket and fired. I was very much frightened, as you may suppose. As for Romer, he never woke till we pushed him hard, he was so completely knocked up. This affair, of course, made us more cautious, and afterwards we lighted two fires, and slept between them, one always remaining on the watch. For a week we travelled on, and as soon as we were over the mountains, we turned our heads to the northward. We now were away from rocks and brushwood, and entered a large plain. Our provisions were all

gone, and we were one day without any; but we killed an antelope called a spring-bock, which gave us provisions for three or four days: there was no want of game after we had descended into the plain. I forgot to mention, however, a narrow escape we had, just before we had left an extensive forest on the side of the mountain. We had walked till past noon, and were very much tired; we decided upon taking our dinner under a large tree, and we threw ourselves down in the shade. Hastings was lying on his back, with his eyes looking upwards, when he perceived on a lower branch of the tree, a panther, which lay along it, his green eyes fixed upon us, and ready to spring: he seized his musket, and fired it without taking aim, for there was no time; but the ball entered the stomach of the animal, and, as it appeared, divided its back-bone. Down came the beast, within three or four feet of where we lay, with a loud roar, and immediately crouched to spring upon Romer;

but it could not, for the back-bone being broken, it had not any power in its hinder quarters, so it raised up its fore quarters, and then dropped down again. I never saw such rage and fury in an animal in my life. At first we were too much frightened to fire; but, perceiving that the beast could not spring, Hastings snatched the musket from Romer, and shot it through the head."

"That was, indeed, another wonderful escape," observed Mrs. Seagrave.

"It was, ma'am; but do you know, we cared less for danger every time we ran into it. We were now obliged to hunt for our livelihood, and we became bolder than ever. Our clothes were all in rags; but we had plenty of powder and ammunition; there were hundreds and hundreds of antelopes and gnus in the plain—indeed, sometimes it was impossible to count them. We didn't want for provisions, I assure you; but this plentiful supply of game was the cause of

our being in greater danger, for now, for the first time, we heard the roar of the lions every night. Of all the noises I ever heard, it is certainly the one which, to my mind, is the most terrible. We made large fires to keep them off, but I assure you they often made us tremble when they came near to us."

"Did you ever meet with one in the day-time?" said Willlam.

"Yes, sir; we often saw them, but they never attacked us, and we were too much afraid to fire at them. Once, we met one face to face. We had killed an antelope called a hartebeest, and, with our muskets on our shoulders, were running to secure it, having marked where it fell in the high grass. Just as we came up to the spot of grass, we heard a roar, and found ourselves not ten yards from a lion, who was lying on the top of the beast we had killed, his eyes flashing fire at us, and half raising himself, as if ready for a spring. We all took to our heels as fast as we

could. I never looked back till I was out of breath : but the lion was content with our running away, and did not take the trouble to follow us. We went to sleep that night without our supper. Well, sir, we had been travelling, we really hardly knew where, but certainly in a northerly direction, for three weeks, and were quite worn out : we now all agreed that we had done a very foolish thing, and would gladly have gone back again. We walked along the whole day without speaking to one another, except when it was necessary to hunt for provisions ; for my part, I declare that I was willing to lie down and die, if I could have so done, and I became quite indifferent to the roaring of the lions, and felt as if I should be glad if one would have made a meal of me ; when, one morning, we fell in with a party of natives. We could not speak to them, but they appeared very peaceable and well-disposed. They were of the Karroo tribe, as they told us by pointing to themselves, and saying,

'Karroos,' and then they pointed to us, and said 'Dutch.' We shot game, and gave it to them, which pleased them very much, and they remained with us for five or six days. We tried by signs to inquire of them, if there were any Dutch settlement about there; and they understood us, and said that there was, in a direction which they pointed out to us, to the north-east. We offered them a present if they would shew us the way; for we had made up our minds that we would give ourselves up to the Dutch, and go back to prison. Two of the men agreed to go with us; the rest of the tribe, with the women and children, went southward. The next day we arrived at a Dutch settlement of three or four farm-houses, called Graef Reynets; but I must leave off now, for it is past bed-time."

SALT-PAN.

CHAPTER IX.

The construction of the fish-pond proceeded rapidly, and on the third day it was nearly complete. As soon as all the walls were finished, Ready threw out sand and shingle, so as to make the part next to the beach nearly as deep as the other; so that there might be sufficient water to

prevent the gulls and man-of-war birds from darting down, and striking the fish. While Ready was thus employed, Mr. Seagrave and William collected more rocks, so as to divide the pond into four parts, at the same time allowing a communication between each part. These inside walls, as well as the outside, were made of sufficient width to walk upon; by which means they would have all the fish within reach of the spear, in case they wished to take them out. The day after the pond was completed the weather changed, but the storms were not so violent as at the commencement of the rainy season. The rain poured down with great force, but it was not accompanied with such terrific thunder and lightning, nor were the storms of so long continuance, generally clearing up after a few hours. In the intervals of fine weather they caught a great many fish, which they put into the pond, so that it was well stocked. But a circumstance occurred, which was the occasion of great alarm

to them all; which was, that one evening William was taken with a shivering, and complained very much of a pain in his head. Ready had promised to continue his narrative on that evening, but William was too ill to sit up. He was put into bed, and the next morning he was in a violent fever. Mr. Seagrave was much alarmed, as the symptoms were worse every hour; and Ready, who had sat up with him during the night, called Mr. Seagrave out of the house, and said, "This is a bad case, sir: Master William was working yesterday with his hat off, and I fear that he has been struck by the sun. It's a pity but we had some one who could take some blood from him."

"I have a lancet," said Mr. Seagrave; "but I really have never bled anybody in my life."

"Nor have I, sir; but if you have a lancet, I think it is our duty to try. If you think that you cannot, I will do my best; it is a very simple operation."

"Well, Ready, one of us must do it, I believe."

"Perhaps my hand will be most steady in this instance, sir," observed Ready; "I'm fearful of the fever going to his brain."

"I would prefer your attempting it, Ready, I must say," replied Mr. Seagrave; "my hand would not be steady, I tremble so for my dear child."

They went into the house again. Mr. Seagrave found his lancet, and Ready bound up William's arm. As soon as the vein was swelled, he held it firm under the ball of his thumb, and was successful in the first attempt. By the advice of Ready, a great deal of blood was taken from the sufferer, who appeared to be much relieved by the operation. His arm was then bandaged, and, having drank a little water, which he asked for, he again was laid upon his pillow. The next day the fever was as violent as ever. William was bled again, and his mother watched over him with anxiety and in tears. The poor boy was for many days in great danger; and

the cheerful house was now one of gloom and silence. How fervent were now the morning and evening prayers; how often during the day did his parents offer up a petition to heaven for their dear boy's recovery. The weather became finer every day, and it was almost impossible to keep Tommy quiet: Juno went out with him and Albert every morning, and kept them with her while she cooked; and, fortunately, Vixen had pupped, and, when Juno could no longer amuse them, she brought them two of the puppies to play with. As for the quiet, meek little Caroline, she would remain during the whole day holding her mother's hand, and watching her brother, or working with her needle by the side of his bed.

Ready, who could not be idle, had taken the hammer and cold chisel to make the salt-pan, at which he worked during those portions of the day in which his services were not required in-doors; and as he sat chipping away the rock,

his thoughts were ever upon William, for he dearly loved the boy for his amiable disposition and his cleverness; and many a time during the day would he stop his work, and the tears would run down his cheeks as he offered up his petition to the Almighty, that the boy might be spared to his afflicted parents. And those prayers were heard, for, on the ninth day, William was pronounced by Ready and Mr. Seagrave to have much less fever, and shortly afterwards it left him altogether; but he was so weak that he could not raise himself in his bed for two or three days; and it was not till more than a fortnight after the fever had left him that he could go out of the house. The joy that was expressed by them all when the change took place may be imagined: nor were the thanksgivings less fervent than had been the prayers. During his convalescence, as there was nothing else to do, Mr. Seagrave and Ready, who now went gladly to their work, determined, as the salt-pan was

finished, that they would make a bathing place. Juno came to their assistance, and was very useful in assisting to drag the wheels which brought the rocks and stones; and Tommy was also brought down, that he might be out of the way while Mrs. Seagrave and Caroline watched the invalid. By the time that William was able to go out of the house, the bathing-place was finished, and there was no longer any fear of the sharks. William came down to the beach with his mother, and looked at the work which had been done; he was much pleased with it, and said, "Now, Ready, we have finished every thing at home for the present; all we have to do is to explore the island, and to go to the cove and examine our collection from the wreck."

"Very true, Master William; and the weather has been so fine, that I think we may venture upon one or the other in a few days more; but not till you are stronger, for you must not be

left alone with your mamma until you are quite well."

"Be left, Ready! why, I was to go with you."

"No, Master William, that cannot be now. Suppose we were to have a storm, and you were to get wet, and have to sleep in your wet clothes, you might be taken with the fever again, and that when you were a long way from home: we must be prudent for a time. Sit down on the rock and enjoy that nice breeze; it will do you good; but you must not stay too long."

"I shall soon be strong again, Ready; thank God for his goodness."

"I have no doubt of it, Master William; and we have good reason to thank God, for we could ill spare you. I am going to take a turtle out of the pond, for we must feed you well, and make you strong."

"It's a long while since you have gone on with your story, Ready," said William, after they had

taken their supper; "I wish you would do so now, as I am sure I shall not be tired."

"With pleasure, Master William," replied Ready; "but can you remember where I left off, for my memory is none of the best?"

"O yes; if you recollect, you had just arrived at a Dutch farmer's house, in company with the savages, at a place called Graef Reynets, I think."

"Very true, sir. Well then, the Dutch farmer came out when he saw us coming, and asked us who we were. We told him that we were English prisoners, and that we wished to give ourselves up to the authorities. He took away our arms and ammunition, and said that he was the authority in that part, which was true enough; and then he said, 'You'll not run away without arms and ammunition, that's certain. As for sending you to the Cape, that I may not be able to do for months; so if you wish to be fed well, you must work well while you're here.' We replied, that we should be very glad to make ourselves useful, and

then he sent us some dinner by a Hottentot girl. and shewed us a small room for us to sleep in. But we soon found out that we had to deal with an ill-tempered, brutal fellow; and that he gave us plenty of hard work, but by no means plenty of food. He would not trust us with guns, so the Hottentots went out with the cattle, but he gave us plenty of work to do about the house; and at last he treated us very cruelly. When he was short of provisions for the Hottentots and other

THE QUAGGA.

slaves, of whom he had a good many, he would go out with the other farmers who lived near him, and shoot quaggas for them to eat. Nobody but a Hottentot could live upon such flesh."

"What is a quagga?"

"A wild ass, partly covered with stripes, but not so much as the zebra; a pretty animal to look at, but the flesh is very bad. Well, sir, he at last would give us nothing to eat but quaggas, the same as the Hottentots, while he and his family—for he had a wife and five children—lived upon mutton and the flesh of the antelope, which is very excellent eating. We asked him to allow us a gun to procure better food, and he kicked Romer so unmercifully, that he could not work for two days afterwards. As for the poor Hottentots and slaves, they were flogged every day, with a whip made of the hide of a rhinoceros, a terrible thing, which cut into the flesh at every blow. Our lives became quite a burden to us; we were

employed all day on the farm one way or another, and every day he was more brutal towards us. At last we agreed that we would stand it no longer, and one evening, Hastings told him so. This put him into a great rage, and he called two of the slaves, and ordered them to tie him to the waggon wheel, swearing that he would cut every bit of skin off his body, and he went into his house to get his whip. The slaves had hold of Hastings, and were tying him up, for they dared not disobey their master, when he said to us, 'If I am flogged this way, it will be all over with us. Now's your time; run back behind the house, and when he comes out with the whip, do you go in and seize the muskets, which are always ready loaded. Hold him at bay till I get clear, and then we will get away somehow or another. You must do it, for I am sure he will flog me till I am dead, and he will shoot you, as runaway prisoners, as he did his two Hottentots the other day.' As Romer and I thought this very probable, we did

as Hastings told us; and when the Dutchman had gone towards him where he was tied up, about fifty yards from the house, we went in. The farmer's wife was in bed, having just given birth to another child, and the children we cared not for. We seized two muskets and a large knife, and came out just as the Dutchman had struck the first blow with the rhinoceros whip, which was so severe, that it took away poor Hastings' breath. We went up; he turned round and saw us: we levelled our muskets at him, and he stopped. 'Another blow, and we'll shoot you,' cried Romer. 'Yes,' cried I; 'we are only boys, but you've Englishmen to deal with.' When we came up, Romer kept his piece levelled at the Dutchman, while I passed him, and with the knife cut the thongs which bound Hastings. The Dutchman turned pale and did not speak, he was so frightened, and the slaves ran away. As soon as Hastings was free, he seized a large wooden mallet, used for driving in stakes, and struck the

Dutchman down to the earth, crying out, 'That, for flogging an Englishman, you rascal.' While the man lay senseless or dead—I didn't know which at the time—we tied him to the waggon wheels, and returning to the house, seized some ammunition and other articles which might be useful. We then went to the stables, and took the three best horses which the Dutchman had, put some corn in a sack for each of them, took some cord for halters, mounted, and rode away as fast as we could. As we knew that we should be pursued, we first galloped away as if we were going eastward, to the Cape; and then, as soon as we were on ground which would not shew the tracks of our horses' hoofs, we turned round to the northward, in the direction of the Bushman country. It was dark soon after we had altered our course; but we travelled all night, and although we heard the roaring of the lions at a distance, we met with no accident. At daylight we rested our horses, and gave them some corn, and then sat down to

eat some of the provisions we had brought with us."

"How long were you with the farmer at Graef Reynets?"

"Nearly eight months, sir; and during that time we could not only speak Dutch, but we could make ourselves understood by the Hottentots and other natives; besides which, we had a good knowledge of the country, and knew what to do when we travelled. While we were eating we held a consultation how we should proceed. We were aware that the Dutchmen would shoot us if they came up with us, and that they would come out in strong force against us; and we were afraid that we had killed the man, and if so, they would hang us as soon as we got to the Cape; so we were at a great loss to know how to act. At last we decided that we would cross the country of the Bushmen, and get to the sea-side, to the northward of the Cape. Having done talking, we took the saddles off our horses, and tethered

them where there was good grass; for you see, sir, if we had not made them fast they would have galloped back to the farm. We determined that it would be better to travel at night, as there would be less fear of the wild beasts, or of being seen; so we went fast asleep for many hours. Towards the evening, we found water for the horses, and then we fed them again, and proceeded on our journey. I won't tell what passed every day for a fortnight, by which time we had pretty well killed our horses, and we were compelled to stop among a tribe of Gorraguas, I think they called them, a very mild, inoffensive people, who supplied us with milk, and treated us very kindly. We had some adventures, nevertheless. One day as we were passing by a tuft of small trees, a rhinoceros charged upon my horse, which very narrowly escaped by wheeling short round and getting behind him; the beast then made off without meddling with us any more. Every day we used to shoot some animal

or other, for provision: sometimes it was a gnu, a very curious creature, something between an antelope and a bull; at other times it was one of the antelope kind—there were plenty of them.

"Well, we staid for three weeks with these people, and gave our horses time to refresh themselves; and then we set off again, keeping more towards the coast as we went southward, for the Gorraguas told us that there was a fierce native tribe, called Kaffers, to the northward, who would certainly kill us if we went there. The fact is, we did not know what to do. We had left the Cape without any exact idea where we should go to, like foolish boys as we were, and we became more entangled with difficulties every day. At last we decided that it would be better to find our way back to the Cape, and deliver ourselves up as prisoners, for we were tired out with fatigue and constant danger. All that we were afraid of was, that we had killed the Dutch farmer at Graef Reynets, who had treated

us so brutally; but Hastings said he did not care; that was his business, and he would take his chance: so when we bade adieu to the Gorraguas, who were quite satisfied with our presenting them with all the buttons we could spare, we turned our horses' heads to the south-east, so to make the sea and go to the southward at the same time.

"I have now to mention a most melancholy event which occurred. Two days after we had

ROMER KILLED BY A LION.

recommenced our travels, in passing through some high grass, we stumbled on a lion, which was devouring a gnu. Romer, who happened to be some ten yards foremost of the three, was so alarmed that he fired at the animal, which we had agreed never to do, as it was folly to enrage so powerful a beast, when our party was so small. The lion was slighty wounded; he gave a roar that might have been heard for a mile, sprang upon Romer, and with one blow of his paw knocked him off the saddle into the bushes. Our horses, which were frightened, wheeled round and fled, for the animal was evidently about to attack us. As it was, he did make one bound in our direction; we could not pull up until we had gone half a mile; and when we did, we saw the lion had torn down the horse which Romer had ridden and was dragging away the carcase to the right at a sort of a canter, without any apparent effort on his part. We waited till he was well off, and then rode back to the spot where Romer had

fallen: we soon found him, but he was quite dead; the blow with the lion's paw had fractured his skull.

"We had no means of burying him, poor fellow! so we covered him up with bushes, and left him. We were both very melancholy; indeed as I rode on, I cried for nearly an hour; and Hastings never spoke a word until it was time for us to rest the horses. I ought to have said that the Gorraguas told us not to travel by night, but by day; and we had done so in consequence of their advice. I believe it was very good advice, notwithstanding this unfortunate accident, for we found that when we had travelled all night the lions had more than once followed us the whole time; and indeed I have often thought since that we were altogether indebted to His mercy who ordereth all things, both in heaven and earth, that we escaped so well as we did. Three days after poor Romer's death we first saw the wide ocean again; and it appeared to us as if

we had fallen in with an old friend. We kept near the coast, but we soon found out that we could not obtain the supply of game, or fuel for our fires at night, so well as we could in the interior, and we agreed to get away from the coast again. We had a dreary plain to pass over, and we were quite faint for want of food—for we had been without any for nearly two days —when we came upon an ostrich. Hastings put his horse to his speed, but it was of no use—the ostrich ran much faster than the horse could. I remained behind, and, to my great joy, discovered his nest, with thirteen large eggs in it. Hastings soon came back, with his horse panting and out of wind. We sat down, lighted a fire, and roasted two of the eggs: we made a good dinner of them, and having put four more on our saddle bows, we continued our journey. For three weeks more we had nothing but difficulty and suffering. One forenoon, at last, we saw the Table Mountain, and were as glad to see it as if we had seen

the white cliffs of Old England. We pushed on our horses with the hopes of being once more comfortably in prison before night; when, as we neared the bay, we observed that English colours were flying on board of the vessels in the road. This surprised us very much; but soon after that we met an English soldier, who told us that the Cape had been taken by our forces more than six months ago. This was a joyful surprise, as you may suppose. We rode into the town, and reported ourselves to the main-guard; the governor sent for us, heard our story, and sent us to the admiral, who took us on board of his own ship. Now, Master William, as this is a good place to leave off at, and you must be rather tired, I think we had better all go to bed."

WILLIAM CONVALESCENT.

CHAPTER X.

The next morning, as there was no particular work on hand, Ready and Mr. Seagrave took the lines to add to the stock of the fish-pond. As the weather was fine and cool, William accompanied them, that he might have the benefit of the fresh air. As they passed the garden, they

observed that the seeds sown had already sprung up an inch or two above the ground, and that, apparently, none of them had missed. While Ready and Mr. Seagrave were fishing, and William sitting near them, William said to his father—

"Many of the islands near us are inhabited; are they not, papa?"

"Yes, but not those very near us, I believe. At all events, I never heard any voyagers mention having seen inhabitants on the isles near which we suppose the one we are on to be."

"What sort of people are the islanders in these seas?"

"They are various. The New Zealanders are the most advanced in civilization, but still they are said to be cannibals. The natives of Van Diemen's Land and Australia are some portions of them of a very degraded class—indeed, little better than the beasts of the field: I believe them to be the lowest in the scale of all the human race."

"I beg your pardon," said Ready, "but I have seen them; and I think I can mention a people, not very numerous indeed, who are still more like the beasts of the field. I saw them once; and, at first, thought they were animals, and not human beings."

"Indeed, Ready; where may that be?"

"In the Great Andaman Isles, at the mouth of the Bay of Bengal.

"I once anchored in distress in Port Cornwallis—a splendid harbour, which would hold the whole English navy—and the morning after we anchored, we saw some black things going upon all-fours under the trees that came down to the water's edge. We got the telescope—for we were a mile or more off the shore—and we perceived then that they were men and women, for they stood upright."

"Did you ever come into contact with them?"

"No, sir, I did not; but I met, at Calcutta, a soldier who had: for at one time the East-India

Company intended making a settlement on the island, and sent some troops there. He said that they had caught two of them; that they were not more than four feet high, excessively stupid and shy; they had no clothes on of any description; they had no houses or huts to live in, and all that they did was to pile up some bushes to keep the wind off."

"Had they any arms?"

"Yes, sir, they had bows and arrows; but so miserably made, and so small, that they could not kill any thing but very small birds. The natives let fly several arrows at the soldiers when they met, and the soldiers picked them out of their coats, for they had not penetrated any further."

"Well, I do believe, by your description, that the Andaman Isles natives are even lower in the scale than the New Hollanders. What did they do with the two whom they captured?"

"Let them go again, sir; for they would not

speak or eat, and they would have died had they been kept."

"Where did the people come from who inhabited these islands, papa?"

"That is difficult to say, William; but it is supposed that they have become inhabited in much the same way as this, our island, has been—that is, by people in canoes or boats driven out to sea, and saving their lives by effecting a landing, as we have done."

"Yes, sir," replied Ready; "I believe that's the truth; I heard say that the Andaman Isles were supposed to have been first inhabited by a slaver full of negroes, who were wrecked on the coast in a typhoon."

"What is a typhoon, Ready?"

"It is much the same as a hurricane, Master William; it comes on in India at the change of the monsoons."

"But what are monsoons, Ready?"

"Winds that blow regular from one quar-

ter so many months during the year, and then change round and blow from another just as long."

"And what are the trade winds, which I heard poor Captain Osborne talking about after we left Madeira?"

"The trade winds blow on the equator, and several degrees north and south of it, from the east to the west, following the course of the sun."

"Is it the sun which produces these winds?"

"Yes, the extreme heat of the sun between the tropics rarefies the air as the earth turns round, and the trade winds are produced by the rushing in of the less heated air. You know that if there is a large fire in a room, there is a continual draft of cold air rushing into the room towards it; in the same way the heat of the sun produces the trade winds."

"Yes, Master William; and the trade winds produce what they call the Gulf stream," observed Ready.

"How is that? I have heard it spoken of, papa."

"The winds, constantly following the sun across the Atlantic Ocean, and blowing from east to west, have great effect upon the sea, which is forced up into the Gulf of Mexico (where it is stopped by the shores of America), so that it is many feet higher in the Gulf than in the eastern part of the Atlantic. This accumulation of water must of course find a vent somewhere, and it does in what is called the Gulf stream, by which the waters are poured out, running very strong to the northward, along the shores of America, and then westward, passing not far from Newfoundland, until its strength is spent somewhere to the northward of the Azores, or Western Isles, which you remember seeing on the chart when we were making our passage out."

"The Gulf stream, Master William," said Ready, "is always several degrees warmer

than the sea in general, which is, they say, owing to its waters remaining in the Gulf of Mexico so long, where the heat of the sun is so great; and we always know when we are in the stream, by the sea-weed which it brings away with it and which is seen floating on the surface."

"What do you mean by the land and sea breezes in the West Indies, and other hot climates, papa?"

"It is the wind first blowing off from the shore, and then blowing from the sea towards the shore, during certain hours of the day, which it does regularly every twenty-four hours. This is also the effect of the heat of the sun. The sea breeze commences in the morning, and in the afternoon it dies away, when the land breeze commences, which lasts till midnight.

"You observe, William," continued Mr. Seagrave, "that all these effects in tropical countries are produced by natural causes; but they are, nevertheless, proofs of the goodness of that

Almighty hand, who has so fashioned the world, that from natural causes, easy to be explained, effects are produced which are beneficial to mankind. For instance, who could inhabit the islands in the West Indies, if the land and sea breezes did not regularly blow, so as to cool the heated surface of the earth? In the same way, if the trade winds did not continually blow, and if calms and light airs prevailed in the seas which are under the burning sun of the equator, the heat would be such as to render the voyage insupportable."

"That it would, sir," replied Ready; "there are latitudes close to the trade winds, where the wind is not certain, where ships have been becalmed for weeks; the crews have exhausted the water on board, and they have suffered dreadfully. We call them the Horse latitudes—why, I do not know; but I believe it is that the horses which they used to send out are, of course, the first sacrificed when the water runs short. But

it is time for us to leave off, and for Master William to go into the house."

They returned home, and after supper Ready went on with his narrative.

"I left off at the time that I was sent on board of the man-of-war, and I was put down on the books as a supernumerary boy. I was on board of her for nearly four years, and we were sent about from port to port, and from clime to clime, until I grew a strong, tall lad, and was put into the mizen-top. I found it very comfortable. I did my duty, and the consequence was, I never was punished; for a man may serve on board of a man-of-war without fear of being punished, if he only does his duty, and the duty is not very hard either; not like on board of the merchant vessels, where there are so few hands—there it is hard work. Of course, there are some captains who command men-of-war who are harsh and severe—what they call martinets in the service; but it was my good fortune to be with a very mild and steady captain,

who was very sorry when he was obliged to punish the men, although he would not overlook any improper conduct. The only thing which was a source of constant unhappiness to me was, that I could not get to England again, and see my mother. I had written two or three letters, but never had an answer; and at last I became so impatient, that I determined to run away the very first opportunity which might offer. We were then stationed in the West Indies, and I had very often consultations with Hastings on the subject, for he was quite as anxious to get away as I was; and we had agreed that we would start off together the very first opportunity. At last we anchored in Port Royal, Jamaica, and there was a large convoy of West India ships, laden with sugar, about to sail immediately. We knew that if we could get on board of one, they would secrete us until the time of sailing, for they were short-handed enough, the men-of-war having pressed every man they could lay

their hands upon. There was but one chance, and that was by swimming on board of one of the vessels during the night-time, and that was easy enough, as they were anchored not a hundred yards from our own ship. What we were afraid of were the sharks, which were so plentiful in the harbour. However, the night before the convoy was to sail we made up our minds that we would run the risk, for we were so impatient to escape that we did not care for any thing. It was in the middle watch—I recollect it, and shall recollect it all my life, as if it were last night—that we lowered ourselves down very softly from the bows of the ship, and as soon as we were in the water we struck out for one of the West Indiamen close to us. The sentry at the gangway saw the light in the water made by our swimming through it, and he hailed, of course: we gave no answer, but swam as fast as we could; for, after he had hailed we heard a bustle, and we knew that the officer of the watch was manning a boat

SWIMMING AT NIGHT.

to send after us. I had just caught hold of the cable of the West Indiaman, and was about to climb up by it, for I was a few yards before Hastings, when I heard a loud shriek, and, turning round, perceived a shark plunging down with Hastings in his jaws. I was so frightened, that for a short time I could not move: at last I recovered myself, and began to climb up by the cable as fast

as I could. I was just in time, for another shark made a rush at me; and although I was clear out of the water more than two feet, he sprung up and just caught my shoe by the heel, which he took down with him. Fear gave me strength, and in a second or two afterwards I was up at the hawseholes, and the men on board, who had been looking over the bows, and had witnessed poor Hastings' death, helped me on board, and hurried me down below, for the boat from our ship was now nearly alongside. When the officer of the boat came on board, they told him they had perceived us both in the water, close to their vessel, and that the sharks had taken us down. As the shriek of Hastings was heard by the people in the boat, the officer believed that it was the case, and returned to the ship. I heard the drum beat to quarters on board of the man-of-war, that they might ascertain who were the two men who had attempted to swim away, and a few minutes afterwards they beat the retreat, having put down

D. D. against my name on the books, as well as against that of poor Hastings."

"What does D. D. mean?"

"D. stands for discharged from the service; D. D. stands for dead," replied Ready; "and it was only through the mercy of Providence that I was not so."

"It was a miraculous escape indeed," observed Mr. Seagrave.

"Yes, indeed, sir; I can hardly describe my sensations for some hours afterwards. I tried to sleep, but could not—I was in agony. The moment I slumbered, I thought the shark had hold of me, and I would start up and shriek; and then I said my prayers and tried to go to sleep again, but it was of no use. The captain of the West Indiaman was afraid that my shrieks would be heard, and he sent me down a tumbler of rum to drink off; this composed me, and at last I fell into a sound sleep. When I awoke, I found that the ship was underweigh and with all canvas set, sur-

rounded by more than a hundred other vessels; the men-of-war who took charge of the convoy firing guns and making signals incessantly. It was a glorious sight, and we were bound for Old England. I felt so happy, that I thought I would risk the jaws of another shark to have regained my liberty, and the chance of being once more on shore in my own country, and able to go to Newcastle and see my poor mother."

"I am afraid that your miraculous escape did you very little good, Ready," observed Mrs. Seagrave, "if you got over it so soon."

"Indeed, madam, it was not so; that was only the feeling which the first sight of the vessels underweigh for England produced upon me. I can honestly say, that I was a better and more serious person; not but what I am bad enough and a sinful creature now, but I was from that day better than I was before. The very next night, when I was in my hammock, I prayed very fervently; and there happened to be a very good

old Scotchman on board, the second mate, who talked very seriously to me, and pointed out how wonderful had been my preservation, and I felt it. It was he who first read the Bible with me, and made me understand it, and, I may say, become fond of it. I did my duty on our passage home as a seaman before the mast, and the captain was pleased with me. I had told the history of my life to the second mate, and he pointed out to me how foolish and wrong I had been to leave my mother and refuse the assistance of Mr. Masterman. I felt that he was right, and I felt more impatient than ever to throw myself into my mother's arms and ask her forgiveness. The ship I was in was bound to Glasgow, and we parted company with the convoy at North Foreland, and arrived safe in port. The captain took me to the owners, who paid me fifteen guineas for my services during the voyage home; and as soon as I received the money, I set off for Newcastle as fast as I could. I had taken a place on the out-

side of the coach, and I entered into conversation with a gentleman who sat next to me. I soon found out that he belonged to Newcastle, and I first inquired if Mr. Masterman, the ship-builder, was still alive. He told me that he had been dead about three months. 'And to whom did he leave his money?' I asked, 'for he was very rich, and had no kin.' 'He had no relations,' replied the gentleman, 'and he left all his money to build an hospital and almshouses. He had a partner in his business latterly, and he left the yard and all the stores to him, I believe, because he did not know whom to leave it to. There was a lad whom I knew for certain he intended to have adopted and to have made his heir—a lad of the name of Ready; but he run away to sea, and has never been heard of since. It is supposed that he was lost in a prize, for he was traced so far. Foolish boy that he was, he might now have been a man of fortune.'

"'Very foolish indeed,' replied I.

"'Yes; but he has harmed more than himself, His poor mother, who doted upon him, as soon as she heard that he was lost, pined away by degrees, and'—

"'You don't mean to say that she is dead?' interrupted I; seizing the gentleman by the arm.

"'Yes,' replied he, looking at me with surprise; 'she died last year of a broken heart.'

"I fell back on the luggage behind me, and should have fallen off the coach if the gentleman had not held me. He called to the coachman to pull up the horses, and they took me down, and put me inside; fortunately there was no one there; and as the coach rolled on, I cried as if my heart would break."

Ready appeared so very much affected, that Mr. Seagrave proposed that he should leave off his history for the present, and that they should retire to rest.

"Thank you, sir, it will be better; for I feel my old eyes dim with tears, even now. It's a dread-

ful thing in after-life to reflect upon, that your foolish conduct has hastened the death of a most kind mother; but so it was, Master William, and I give you the truth for your advantage. I told you that portions of my life would serve as a warning; let them not be thrown away upon you. God bless you, sir! God bless you, madam! Good night."

TOMMY STEALING EGGS.

CHAPTER XI.

A FEW mornings afterwards, Juno came in before breakfast with six eggs in her apron, which she had found in the hen-house.

"Look, Missy Seagrave—fowls lay eggs—soon have plenty—plenty for Master William—make him well again—and plenty for chickens by-and-by."

"You haven't taken them all out of the nests, Juno; have you?"

"No, Missy;—leave one in each nest for hen to see."

"Well, then, we will keep them for William, and I hope, as you say, it will make him strong again."

"I am getting quite strong now, mother," replied William; "I think it would be better to leave the eggs for the hens to sit upon."

"No, no, William; your health is of more consequence than having early chickens."

"Tommy likes eggs very much," said Tommy.

"Yes; but Tommy cannot have any at present: Tommy is not ill."

"Tommy have a stomach-ache," replied Tommy.

"I am afraid that you are a little story-teller, Tommy; and if you have a stomach-ache, eggs would be bad for you."

"Tommy got a head-ache," replied the boy.

"Eggs are not good for head-aches, Tommy," replied his father.

"Tommy ill all over," replied Tommy again.

"Then Tommy must be put to bed, and have a dose of castor oil."

"Tommy don't want castor oil; Tommy wants eggs."

"Yes, but Tommy won't get eggs," replied his father, "so he may as well leave off telling fibs; when there are plenty of eggs, Tommy will have one, if he is a good boy, and not otherwise."

"I have promised Caroline that she is to take care of the chickens," said Mrs. Seagrave, "and I think she must have the egg department also; she promises to be a very useful little girl."

For a few days Mr. Seagrave and Ready were employed at the garden clearing away the weeds, which had begun to sprout up along with the seeds, which had been sown; during which time William recovered very fast. The two first days, Juno brought in three or four eggs regularly;

but on the third day there were none to be found. On the fourth day the hens appeared also not to have laid, much to the surprise of Mrs. Seagrave; as when hens commence laying eggs they usually continue. On the fifth morning, when they sat down to breakfast, Master Tommy did not make his appearance, and Mrs. Seagrave asked where he was.

"I suspect, madam," said old Ready, laughing, "that Master Tommy will not come either to his breakfast or his dinner to-day."

"What can you mean, Ready?" said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Why, madam, I will tell you. I thought it very odd that there were no eggs, and I thought it probable that the hens might have laid astray; so I went about yesterday evening to search. I could not find any eggs, but I found the egg-shells, hid under some cocoa-nut leaves; and I argued, that if an animal, supposing there was any on the island, had taken the eggs, it

would not have been so careful to hide the egg-shells. So, this morning, I fastened up the door of the hen-house, and only left open the little sliding-door, by which the fowls go in to roost; and then, after you were up, I watched behind the trees, and saw Master Tommy come out, and go to the hen-house. He tried the door, and finding it fast, he then crept into the hen-house by the little sliding-door. As soon as he was in, I let down the slide, and fastened it with a nail; so there he is, caught in his own trap."

"And there shall he remain all day, the little glutton!" said Mr. Seagrave, who was much amused.

"Yes, it will serve him right," replied Mrs. Seagrave; "and be a lesson to him. We will take no notice of him whatever, if he halloos and screams for an hour."

"Oh, Massa Tommy, me very glad you cotch at last; teach you not to suck eggs," said Juno: "now you got nothing to eat; you not like that."

Mr. Seagrave, Ready, and William, as usual, went down to their work; Mrs. Seagrave and Juno, with little Caroline, were busy in-doors. Tommy remained very quiet for an hour, when he commenced roaring; but it was of no use, no one paid any attention to him. At dinner-time he began to roar again, but with as little success: it was not till the evening that the door of the hen-house was opened, and Master Tommy permitted to come out. He looked very foolish; and sat down in a corner without speaking.

"Well, Master Tommy, how many eggs did you suck to-day?" said Ready.

"Tommy won't suck eggs any more," said the urchin.

"No, you had better not," replied Mr. Seagrave, "or you will find, in the end, that you will have less to eat, instead of more, as you have this day."

"I want my dinner," said Tommy.

"You'll have no dinner this day, you may be sure," said Mrs. Seagrave; "we can't allow you dinner and eggs both; and if you cry, I will lock you up in the hen-house all night; you must now wait patiently till supper-time."

Tommy found that he could not help himself, so he waited very quietly and very sulkily till supper was ready, when he made up for lost time. After which Ready continued his narrative.

"I told you, Master William, that I was informed by the gentleman on the coach that my mother had died of a broken heart, in consequence of my supposed death. I was in an agony until I arrived at Newcastle, where I could ascertain all the facts connected with her decease. When the coach stopped, the gentleman, who had remained outside, came to the coach door, and said to me, 'If I mistake not, you are Masterman Ready, who ran away to sea;

are you not?' 'Yes, sir,' replied I, very sorrowfully, 'I am.' 'Well, my man,' said he, 'cheer up; when you went away you were young and thoughtless, and certainly had no idea that you would have distressed your mother as you did. It was not your going to sea, but the report of your death, which preyed so much upon her mind; and that was not your fault. You must come with me, as I have something to say to you.

"'I will call upon you to-morrow, sir,' replied I; 'I cannot do any thing until I talk to the neighbours and visit my poor mother's grave. It is very true that I did not intend to distress my mother; and that the report of my death was no fault of mine. But I cannot help feeling that, if I had not been so thoughtless, she would be still alive and happy.' Great mischief is brought about by very slight causes in this world, Master William; and if, before we did any thing, we were to reflect upon what the

consequences might be, we should all be much wiser and much better. The gentleman gave me his address, and I promised to call upon him the next morning. I then went to the house my mother used to live in. I knew that she was not there; yet I was disappointed and annoyed when I heard merry laughter within. I looked in, for the door was open; in the corner where my mother used to sit, there was a mangle, and two women busily at work; others were ironing at a large table; and when they cried out to me, 'What do you want?' and laughed at me, I turned away in disgust, and went to a neighbouring cottage, the inmates of which had been very intimate with my mother. I found the wife at home, but she did not know me; and I told her who I was. She had attended my mother during her illness, till the day of her death; and she told me all I wished to know. It was some little relief to my mind to hear that my poor mother could not have lived, as she

had an incurable cancer; but at the same time the woman told me that I was ever in her thoughts, and that my name was the last word on her lips. She also said that Mr. Masterman had been very kind to my mother, and that she had wanted nothing. I then asked her to shew me where my mother had been buried.

READY AT HIS MOTHER'S GRAVE

She put on her bonnet, and led me to the grave, and then, at my request, she left me. I seated myself down by the mound of turf which covered her, and long and bitterly did I weep her loss and pray for forgiveness.

"It was quite dark when I left the spot and went back to the cottage of the kind woman who had attended my mother. I conversed with her and her husband till late, and then, as they offered me a bed, I remained with them that night. Next morning I went to keep my appointment with the gentleman whom I had met in the coach: I found by the brass plate on the door that he was a lawyer. He desired me to sit down, and then he closed the door carefully, and having asked me many questions to ascertain if I was really Masterman Ready, he said he was the person employed at Mr. Masterman's death, and that he had found a paper which was of great consequence, as it proved that the insurance of the vessel, which had belonged to my father and

Mr. Masterman, and which had been lost, had not been made on Mr. Masterman's share only, but upon my father's as well, and that Mr. Masterman had defrauded my mother. He said he had found the paper in a secret drawer some time after Mr. Masterman's death, and that my mother being dead, and I being supposed to be dead, he did not see any use in making known so disagreeable a circumstance; but that, now I had re-appeared, it was his duty so to do, and that he would arrange the matter for me, if I pleased, with the corporation of the town, to whom all Mr. Masterman's property had been left in trust to build an hospital and alms-houses. He said that the insurance on the vessel was three thousand pounds, and that one-third of the vessel belonged to my father, so that a thousand pounds were due to him, which the interest for so many years would increase to above two thousand pounds. This was good news for me, and you may suppose I readily agreed to all he proposed. He set to

work at once, and having called together the mayor and corporation of the town, and proved the document, they immediately agreed that I was entitled to the money, and that it should be paid to me without any contest. Thus you see, Master William, was a new temptation thrown in my way."

"How do you mean a temptation? It surely was very fortunate, Ready," said William.

"Yes, Master William, it was, as people say, fortunate, according to the ideas of the world; every one congratulated me, and I was myself so inflated with my good fortune, that I forgot all the promises of amendment, all the vows of leading a good life, which I made over my poor mother's grave. Now do you perceive why I called it a temptation, Master William?"

"My dear child," said Mr. Seagrave, "riches and prosperity in this world prove often the greatest of temptations; it is adversity that chastens and amends us, and which draws us to our God. Hath not our Saviour declared, 'That

it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven?' This is intended to be understood as a metaphor, not as a positive assertion; and is explained by our Lord himself in a similar passage, where he says, 'How hard is it for them that *trust* in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!' This expression of our Saviour is followed up in the Litany of our church service, in which we make this solemn appeal: 'In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our *wealth*, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, good Lord deliver us.' Great, indeed, must be the peril of wealth, when it is thus coupled with such awful positions as 'the hour of death and the day of judgment.' Ready, therefore, was correct in asserting that the sudden accession to so large a sum of money was a temptation; and you perceive by his own acknowledgment, that he could not resist it, but forgot all his good resolutions."

"Yes, sir; you have well explained it; and

such was the fact. As soon as the money was in my own hands, I began to squander it away in all manner of folly. Fortunately, I had not received it more than ten days, when the Scotch second mate came like a guardian angel to save me. As soon as I had made known to him what had taken place, he reasoned with me, pointed out to me that I had an opportunity of establishing myself for life, and proposed that I should purchase a part of a vessel, on condition that I was captain of her. I liked this idea very much, and being convinced that I had been making a fool of myself, I resolved to take his advice; but one thing only restrained me: I was still very young, not more than twenty years old; and although I could navigate at one time, I had latterly paid no attention. I told Sanders this, and he replied, that if I would take him as my first mate, that difficulty would be got over, as he could navigate well, and that I could learn to do so in the first voyage; so all was arranged.

"Fortunately, I had not spent above one hundred pounds of the money—quite enough too in so short a time. I set off for Glasgow, in company with Sanders, and he busied himself very hard in looking about for a vessel that would suit. At last, he found that there was one ready for launching, which, in consequence of the failure of the house for which it was built, was to be sold. He made inquiries, and having found who was likely to purchase her—that it was a very safe and respectable firm—he made a proposal for me that I should take one-fourth share of her, and command her. As Sanders was very respectable, and well known to be a steady man, his recommendation was attended to so far, that the parties wished to see and speak to me. They were satisfied with me, young as I was, and the bargain was made. I paid down my two thousand pounds for my share, and as soon as the vessel was launched, was very busy with Sanders, whom I had chosen as first mate, in fitting her out. The

house which had purchased her with me was a West India firm, and the ship was of course intended for the West India trade. I had two or three hundred pounds left, after I had paid my share of the veesel, and this I employed in purchasing a venture on my own account, and providing nautical instruments, &c. I also fitted myself out, for you see, Master William, although Sanders had persuaded me to be rational, I was still puffed up with pride at the idea of being captain of my own ship; it was too great a rise for one who had just before been a lad in the mizen-top of a man-of-war. I dressed myself very smart—wore white shirts, and rings on my fingers; I even put on gloves, and tried to make my hands white. Indeed, as captain and part owner of a fine vessel, I was considered as somebody, and was often invited to the table of the other owners of the vessel. I was well off, for my pay was ten pounds a month, independent of what my own venture might produce, and my quarter-share

of the profits of the vessel. This may be considered as the most prosperous portion of my life; and so, if you please, we will leave off here for to-night, for I may as well tell you at once that it did not last very long."

LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR.

CHAPTER XII.

For several days after, they were employed in clearing away the stumps of the cocoa-nut trees in the winding path to the storehouse; and as soon as that work was finished, Ready put up a lightning conductor at the side of the storehouse, like the one which he had put up near to the cottage.

They had now got through all the work that they had arranged to do during the rainy season. The ewes had dropped their lambs, but both the sheep and the goats began to suffer for want of pasture. For a week they had no rain, and the sun burst out very powerfully; and Ready stated, that it was his opinion that the rainy season was now over. William had become quite strong again, and he was very impatient that they should commence the survey of the island, and very anxious to be of the party. After a great deal of consultation, it was at last settled, that Ready and William should make the first survey to the southward, and then return and report what they had discovered. This was decided upon on the Saturday evening, and on the Monday morning they were to start. The knapsacks were got ready, and well filled with boiled salt pork, and flat cakes of bread, made by Juno. They were each to have a musket and ammunition, and a blanket was folded up to carry on the shoulders, that

they might sleep on it at night. Ready did not forget his compass, or the small axes, for them to blaze the trees as they went through the wood. The whole of Saturday was occupied in making their preparations. After supper, Ready said, "Now, Master William, before we start on our travels, I think I may as well wind up my history. I haven't a great deal more to tell, as my good fortune did not last long; and after my remaining so long in a French prison, my life was one continued chapter of from bad to worse. I left off where I had purchased a share of a merchant vessel, and was, in my opinion, on the full trip to fortune: so now to proceed. Our ship was soon ready, and we sailed with convoy for Barbadoes. Sanders proved a good navigator, and from him, before we arrived at Barbadoes, I gained all the knowledge which I required to enable me to command and navigate my vessel. Sanders attempted to renew our serious conversation, but my property had made me vain; and now that I felt I

could do without his assistance, I not only kept him at a distance, but assumed the superior. This was a very ungrateful return for his kindness to me, Master William; but it is too often the case in this world. Sanders was very much annoyed, and on our arrival at Barbadoes, he told me that it was his intention to quit the vessel. I replied very haughtily, that he might do as he pleased; the fact is, I was anxious to get rid of him, merely because I was under obligations to him: I tell this to my shame, Master William. Well, sir, Sanders left me, and I felt quite happy at his departure. My ship was soon with a full cargo of sugar on board of her, and we waited for convoy to England. When at Barbadoes, I had an opportunity to buy four brass guns, which I mounted on deck, and had a good supply of ammunition on board. I was very proud of my vessel, as she had proved in the voyage out to be a very fast sailer: indeed, she sailed better than some of the men-of-war which convoyed us; and now that I

had guns on board, I considered myself quite safe from any of the enemies' privateers. While we were waiting for convoy, which was not expected for a fortnight, it blew a very heavy gale, and my ship, as well as others, dragged their anchors, and were driven out of Carlisle Bay. We were obliged to make sail to beat into the bay again, it still blowing very fresh. What with being tired waiting so long for convoy, and the knowledge that arriving before the other West Indiamen would be very advantageous, I made up my mind that, instead of beating up into the bay again, I would run for England without protection, trusting to the fast sailing of my vessel and the guns which I had on board. I forgot at the time that the insurance on the vessel was made in England as 'sailing with convoy,' and that my sailing without would render the insurance void, if any misfortune occurred. Well, sir, I made sail for England, and for three weeks every thing went on well. We saw very few vessels, and those which did chase us

could not come up with us; but as we were running with a fair wind up channel, and I had made sure of being in port before night, a French privateer hove in sight and gave chase. We were obliged to haul our wind, and it blowing very fast, we carried away our main-top-mast. This accident was fatal; the privateer came alongside of us and laid us by the board, and that night I was in a French prison, and I may say, a pauper; for the insurance of the vessel was void, from my having sailed without convoy. I felt that I had no one to thank but myself for the unfortunate position I was in; at all events, I was severely punished, for I remained a prisoner for nearly six years. I contrived to escape with three or four others; we suffered dreadfully, and at last arrived in England, in a Swedish vessel, without money, or even clothes that would keep out the weather. Of course, I had nothing to do but to look out for a berth on board of a ship, and I tried for that of second mate, but without success; I

was too ragged and looked too miserable; so I determined, as I was starving, to go before the mast. There was a fine vessel in the port; I went on board to offer myself; the mate went down to the captain, who came on deck, and who should he be but Sanders? I hoped that he would not remember me, but he did immediately, and held out his hand. I never did feel so ashamed in my life as I did then. Sanders perceived it, and asked me down into the cabin. I then told him all that had happened, and he appeared to forget that I had behaved so ill to him; he offered me a berth on board, and money in advance to fit me out. But if *he* would not remember my conduct, I could not forget it, and I told him so, and begged his forgiveness. Well, sir, that good man, as long as he lived, was my friend. I became his second mate before he died, and we were again very intimate. My misfortunes had humbled me, and I once more read the Bible with him; and I have, I trust, done so ever since. When he died, I con-

tinued second mate for some time, and then was displaced. Since that, I have always been as a common seaman on board of different vessels; but I have been well treated and respected, and I may add, I have not been unhappy, for I felt that property would have only led me into follies, and have made me forget, that in this world we are to live so as to prepare ourselves for another. Now, Master William, you have the history of Master-man Ready; and I hope that there are portions of it which may prove useful to you. I am now an old man, and weaned from the things of this world; all I hope is to die in peace, and be useful until it pleases God to call me away."

"Useful you have been, indeed, lately," said Mrs. Seagrave; "and I hope you will live a long while yet, Ready, and have a happy old age."

"It will be as God pleases, madam," replied Ready; "but sailors are not long-lived. I feel as if I could pass the remainder of my days on this little island with perfect content. I know

you all feel otherwise, but that is natural. I am an old man already, and have nothing to look forward to; I have no relations, no children; and all I require is, employment to amuse me, and my Bible to teach me how to die. You are all young compared to me, and naturally look forward. For your sakes, and not for my own, I sincerely hope we shall be searched for, and found, and that you may return to the busy world. As for myself, I would willingly remain upon the island for the remainder of my days, and have the boughs of the cocoa-nut trees waving over my grave. I don't know, but I really have a kind of feeling that such will be the case, and I dwell upon the idea with pleasure."

"No, no, Ready, you must not think of that; you must go back with us one of these days," replied Mr. Seagrave, "and live with us altogether. We never part again. You must give up your seafaring life, and sit in the chimney corner, or bask in the sun out of doors, just as you

please. You require repose, and I trust your old age will be cheerful. At all events, it shall not be my fault if it is not."

"Nor mine, Ready, I assure you," added Mrs. Seagrave; "I should feel uncomfortable if I were ever to be parted from you again."

"Thank you, madam, and thank you, sir, both of you; I thank you kindly for your good intentions towards me; but there is One above who will decide for us, and whatever He decrees is right.

"Master William, we must be off betimes to-morrow, and as we are all to breakfast early together, why I think the sooner we go to bed the better."

"Very true," replied Mr. Seagrave. "William dear, bring me the Bible."

DEPARTURE ON A SURVEY.

CHAPTER XIII.

They were all up early the next morning, and breakfasted at an early hour. The fried fish was excellent, and Master Tommy was nearly choked by a bone, which stuck in his throat, in consequence of his being so greedy, and eating so fast.

However, after a good deal of thumping, and some alarm on the part of Mrs. Seagrave, Juno forced her fore-finger down his throat, and the bone disappeared. The knapsacks and guns, and the other requisites for the journey, were all prepared; William and Ready rose from the table, and taking an affectionate leave of Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave, they started on their journey. The sun was shining brilliantly, and the weather had become warm; the ocean in the distance gleamed brightly, as its waters danced, and the cocoa-nut trees moved their branches gracefully to the breeze. They set off in high spirits, and having called the two shepherd dogs, and driven back Vixen, who would have joined the party, they passed the storehouse, and ascending the hill on the other side, they got their hatchets ready to blaze the trees; and Ready having set his course by his pocket compass, they were fairly on their way. For some time they continued to cut the bark of the trees with their

hatchets, without speaking, and then Ready stopped again to look at his compass.

"I think the wood is thicker here than ever, Ready," observed William.

"Yes, sir, it is; but I suspect we are now in the thickest part of it, right in the middle of the island; however, we shall soon see. We must keep a little more away to the southward. We had better get on as fast as we can. We shall have less work by-and-by, and then we can talk better."

For half an hour they continued their way through the wood, and, as Ready had observed, the trees became more distant from each other; still, however, they could not see any thing before them but the stems of the cocoa-nuts. It was hard work, chopping the trees every second, and their foreheads were moist with the exertion.

"I think we had better pull up for a few minutes, Master William; you will be tired:

you are not so strong as you were before your fever."

"I have not been so used to exercise, Ready, and therefore I feel it more," replied William, wiping his face with his handkerchief, as he laid his gun against the trunk of a tree. "I should like to stop a few minutes. How long do you think it will be before we are out of the wood?"

"Not half an hour more, sir, I should think; even before that, perhaps. I do not know how far the wood may extend this way."

"What do you expect to find, Ready?"

"That's a difficult question to answer. I can tell you what I *hope* to find, which is, a good space of clear ground between the beach and the wood, where we may pasture our sheep and goats; and perhaps we may find some other trees besides cocoa-nuts: at present, you know we have seen only them and the castor oil beans, that Master Tommy took such a dose of.

You see, Master William, there is no saying what new seeds may have been brought here by birds, or by the winds and waves."

"But will those seeds grow?"

"Yes, Master William; I have been told that seeds may remain hundreds of years under ground, and come up afterwards, when exposed to the heat."

"Now I recollect," replied William; "my father told me that the wheat, which had been buried in an Egyptian mummy three or four thousand years back, had been known to grow, when planted."

"What's a mummy, Master William? I have heard of Egypt: it was the country where the Jews were in bondage, and from which they were delivered. We read all that in the Bible; and how Pharaoh was plagued until he permitted them to depart."

"Yes; he was drowned, with all his host, because he followed them to bring them back

again. A mummy, Ready, is a human body, embalmed with spices after it is dead, so as to preserve it. I never saw one; but I know, from what I have read, that the Egyptians used to embalm the bodies of the dead. I am quite ready to go on now."

"Well, then, the sooner we get through the wood the better, Master William; so let us put our best foot foremost, as the saying is."

They continued their way, and had not walked for more than a quarter of an hour, when William cried out, "I see the blue sky, Ready; we shall soon be out; and glad shall I be, for my arm aches with chopping."

"I dare say it does, sir. I am just as glad as you are, for I'm tired of marking the trees; however, we must continue to mark, or we shall not find our way back when we want it."

In ten minutes more they were clear of the cocoa-nut grove, and found themselves among brushwood higher than their heads; so that they

could not see how far they were from the shore.

"Well," said William, throwing down his hatchet, "I'm glad that's over; now let us sit down a little before we go any farther."

"I'm of your opinion, sir," replied Ready, sitting down by the side of William; "I feel more tired to-day than I did when we first went through the wood, after we set off from the cove. I suppose it's the weather. Come back, dogs; lie down."

"The weather is very fine, Ready."

"Yes, now, sir; but I meant to have said that the rainy season is very trying to the health, and I suppose I have not recovered from it yet. You have had a regular fever, and, of course, do not feel strong; but a man may have no fever, and yet his health suffer a great deal from it. I am an old man, Master William, and feel these things now."

"I think that before we go on, Ready, we had better have our dinner; that will do us good."

"Well, Master William, we will take an early dinner, and we shall get rid of one bottle of water, at all events; indeed, I think that, as we must go back by the same way we came, we may as well leave our knapsacks and every thing but our guns under these trees; I dare say we shall sleep here too, for I told Mr. Seagrave positively not to expect us back to-night. I did not like to say so before your mother, she is so anxious about you." They opened their knapsacks, and made their meal, the two dogs coming in for their full share; after which they again started on their discoveries. For about ten minutes they continued to force their way through the thick and high bushes, till at last they broke out clear of them, and then looked around them for a short time without speaking. The sea was about half a mile distant, and the intervening land was clear, with fresh blades of grass just bursting out of the earth, composing a fine piece of pasture of at least fifty acres, here and there broken with small patches

of trees and brushwood; there was no sandy beach, but the rocks rose from the sea about twenty to thirty feet high, and were in one or two places covered with something which looked as white as snow.

DISCOVERY.

"Well, Ready," said William, "there will be no want of pasture for our flock, even if it increases to ten times its number."

"No, sir," replied Ready, "we are very fortu-

nate, and have great reason to be thankful; this is exactly what we required; and now let us go on a little, and examine these patches of wood, and see what they are. I see a bright green leaf out there, which, if my eyes do not fail me, I have seen many a time before. When they arrived at the clump of trees which Ready had pointed out, he said, "Yes, Master William, I was right. Look there, this is the banana; it is just bursting out now, and will soon be ten feet high, and bearing fruit which is excellent eating; besides which, the stem is capital fodder for the beasts. God is gracious."

"Here is a plant I never saw before; this little one," said William, pulling up a piece of it, and shewing it to Ready.

"But I have, Master William. It is what they call the bird's-eye pepper; they make Cayenne pepper out of it. Look, the pods are just formed; it will be useful to us in cooking, as we have no pepper left. Juno will be quite pleased. You see,

Master William, we must have some birds on the island; at least it is most probable, for all the seeds of these plants and trees must have been brought here by them. The banana and the pepper are the food of many birds. One seed has dropped and grown up, and then the seeds of the first have sowed themselves, and grown up every year, and that is the reason they are all in patches here and there. What a quantity of bananas are springing up in this spot; there will be a little forest of them in a few weeks."

"What is that rough-looking sort of shrub out there, Ready?"

"I can't see so well as you, Master William, so let us walk up to it. Oh, I know it now; it is what they call the prickly pear in the West Indies. I am very glad to have found that, for it will be very useful to us."

"Is it good eating, Ready?"

"Not particularly; and the little spikes run into your fingers, and are very difficult to get

rid of; but it is not bad by way of a change. No, sir, the use it will be to us is to hedge in our garden, and protect it from the animals; it makes a capital fence, and grows very fast, and without trouble. Why, there's half an acre of them; they are just coming into blossom. Now let us go on to that patch of trees, and see what they are."

"What is this plant, Ready?"

"I don't know, Master William; I can't say that I ever saw it before."

"Then I think I had better make a collection of all those you don't know, and take them back to my father, for he is a very good botanist, and I dare say will know them all."

"We will do so, sir; it is a very good thought of yours."

William pulled a branch of the plant off, and carried it with him. On their arrival at the next patch of trees, Ready looked at them steadfastly for some time.

"Let me see," said he; "I think I know that tree, I have often seen it in hot countries. Yes, I have it, Master William; it's the guava."

"What! is it the fruit they make guava jelly of?" said William.

"Yes, Master William, the very same."

"How Tommy will smack his lips when he hears of it. Captain Osborne gave us guava jelly on our passage out, and Tommy was never satisfied, he always wanted more."

"Little boys of Master Tommy's age do think more of eating than any thing else; that's very natural, so we must not be too hard upon Master Tommy; he'll turn out a fine fellow yet, depend upon it, Master William."

"I'm sure I hope so, Ready, and I really think that he will. Shall we go on now?"

"Yes, sir; which way would you like to go?"

"Let us walk in the direction of those five or six trees, and from there down to the rocks; I

want to find out how it is that they are so white."

"Be it so, sir, if you wish," replied Ready.

"Why, Ready, what noise is that? Hark! such a chattering, it must be monkeys."

"No, sir, they are not monkeys; but I'll tell you what they are, although I cannot see them; they are parrots—I know their noise well. You see, Master William, it's not very likely that monkeys should get here, but birds can, and it is the birds that we have to thank for the bananas, and guavas, and other fruits we may find here."

As soon as they came under the trees, there was a great rioting and fluttering, and then flew away, screaming as loud as they could, a flock of about three hundred parrots, their beautiful green and blue feathers glistening in the beams of the sun.

"I told you so, sir; well, we'll have some capital pies out of them, Master William."

"Pies! do they make good pies, Ready?"

"Yes, excellent; and very often have I had a

good dinner from one in the West Indies, and in South America. Stop, sir, let us come a little this way; I see a leaf which I should like to examine."

"The ground is very swampy just here, Ready; is it not?"

"Yes; there's plenty of water below, I don't doubt. So much the better for the animals; we must dig some pools when they come here."

"Oh! I thought I was not wrong. Look, sir! this is the best thing I have found yet—we now need not care so much about potatoes."

"Why, what are they, Ready?"

"Yams, sir; yams, which they use instead of potatoes in the West Indies. Indeed, potatoes do not remain potatoes long, when planted in the hot climates."

"How do you mean, Ready?"

"They turn into what they call sweet potatoes, after one or two crops: yams are better things, in my opinion."

At this moment the dogs dashed among the broad yam leaves, and commenced baying; there was a great rustling and snorting.

"What's that?" cried William, who had been stooping down to examine the yam plant, and who was startled at the noise.

Ready laughed heartily. "It isn't the first time that they've made you jump, Master William."

"Why, it's our pigs; isn't it?" replied William.

"To be sure; they're in the yam patch, very busy feeding on them, I'll be bound."

Ready gave a shout, and a grunting and rushing were heard among the broad leaves, and, very soon, out rushed, instead of the six, about thirty pigs, large and small; who, snorting and twisting their tails, galloped away at a great rate across the pasture-land, until they gained the cocoa-nut grove.

"How wild they are, Ready," said William.

"Yes, sir, and they'll be wilder every day: but we must fence these yams from them, or we shall get none ourselves."

"But they'll beat down the fence before it grows up."

"Yes, sir; but we'll pale it in with cocoa-nut palings, and plant the prickly pears outside; before the palings are rotten, the prickly pears will make a hedge which no animal can get through. Now, sir, we'll go down to the sea-side."

As they neared the rocks, which were bare for about fifty yards from the water's edge, Ready said, "I can tell you now what those white patches on the rocks are, Master William; they are the places where the sea-birds come to every year to make their nests, and bring up their young. They always come to the same place every year, if they are not disturbed." They soon arrived at the spot, and found it white with the feathers of birds, mixed up with dirt.

"I see no nests, Ready, nor the remains of any."

"No, sir, they do not make any nests, further than scratching a round hole, about half an inch deep, in the soil, and there they lay their eggs, sitting quite close to one another; they will soon be here, and begin to lay, and then we will come and take the eggs, if we want any, for they are not bad eating."

"Why, Ready, what a quantity of good things we have found out already. This has been a very fortunate expedition of ours."

"Yes, it has; and we may thank God for his goodness, who thus provides for us so plentifully in the wilderness; and recollect, that every year, if we are industrious, we shall add to our means."

"Do you know, Ready, I cannot help thinking, that we ought to have built our house here."

"Not so, Master William; we have not the pure water, recollect, and we have not the advantages of the sandy beach, where we have our

turtle and fish-pond. No, Master William: we may feed our stock here; we may gather the fruit, taking our share of it with the poor birds; we may get our yams, and every other good provided for us; but our house and home must be where it is now."

"You are right, Ready; but it will be a long walk."

"Not when we are accustomed to it, and have made a beaten path, Master William; besides, we may bring the boat round, perhaps. I wish to go down to the rocks to see."

They then walked along the sea-side for about a quarter of a mile, until they came to where the rocks were not so high, and there they discovered a little basin, completely formed in the rocks, with a narrow entrance.

"See, Master William, what a nice little harbour for our boat; we may here load it with yams and take it round to the bay, provided we can find an entrance through the reefs on the southern side

THE BOAT HARBOUR.

of it, which we have not looked for yet, because we have not required it."

"Yes, Ready—it is, indeed, a nice, smooth little place for the boat; but how shall we find it out again, when we come on this side of the island in the boat?"

"Very easily, Master William, for I'll fix up a flag-staff as a mark."

"What is that thing on the bottom, there, Ready?" said William, pointing in the direction.

"I see it, sir; that is a sea crawfish, quite as good eating as a lobster. I wonder if I could make a lobster pot; we should catch plenty, and very good they are."

"And what are those little rough things on the rocks?"

"They are a very nice little sort of oyster, sir, very sweet; not like those we have in England, but very much better indeed, they are so delicate."

"Why, Ready, we have two more good things for our table, again," replied William; "how rich we shall be."

"Yes, sir; but we have to catch them, recollect: there is nothing to be had in this world without labour. The world is full of all that is useful to man; but the Almighty has declared that it is by the sweat of the brow that we are to gain our bread."

"Ready," said William, "we have good three hours' daylight; suppose we go back and tell what we have seen: my mother will be so glad to see us."

"I agree with you, Master William. We have done well for one day; and may safely go back again, and remain for another week, if that is all; that is, if we are wanted. There are no fruits at present, and all I care about are the yams; I should like to protect them from the pigs. But let us go home and talk the matter over with Mr. Seagrave."

William, as he walked away from the beach towards the cocoa-nut grove, picked a sprig of every plant he fell in with, to take back to his father. They found out the spot where they had left their knapsacks and hatchets, and again took their path through the cocoa-nut trees, following the blaze which they had made in the morning. One hour before sunset they arrived at the house, where they found Mr. and Mrs.

Seagrave sitting outside, and Juno standing on the beach with the two children, who were amusing themselves with picking up the shells which were strewed about. William gave a very clear account of all they had seen, and shewed his father the specimens of the plants which he had collected.

"This," said Mr. Seagrave, "is a well-known plant; and I wonder Ready did not recognize it; it is hemp."

"I never saw it except in the shape of rope," replied Ready. "I know the seed well enough."

"Well, if we require it, I can tell you how to dress it," replied Mr. Seagrave. "Now, William, what is the next?"

"This odd-looking, rough thing."

"That's the egg-plant: it bears a fruit of a blue colour. I am told they eat it in the hot countries."

"Yes, sir, they do; they fry it with pepper and salt; they call it bringal. I think it must be that."

"I do not doubt but you are right," replied

Mr. Seagrave. "Why, William, you should know this."

"It is like the grape-vine."

"Yes, and it is so; it is the wild grape; we shall eat them by-and-by; perhaps make wine; who knows?"

"I have only one more, papa: what is this?"

"You don't know it, because it has sprung up so high, William; but it is the common mustard plant,—what we use in England, and sold as mustard and cress. Well, I think you have now made a famous day's work of it; and we have much to thank God for. Here comes Juno to get supper on the table; so we will go: the sun is just disappearing, and it will be dark in a few minutes."

As soon as they had returned to the house, a consultation was held as to their future proceedings; and, after some debate, it was agreed that it would be advisable that they should take the boat out of the sand; and, as soon as it was

ready, examine the reef on the southward, to see if they could find a passage through it, as it would take a long while to go round it; and, as soon as that was accomplished, Mr. Seagrave, Ready, William, and Juno, should all go through the wood, carrying with them a tent to pitch on the newly discovered piece of ground: and that they should set up a flag-staff at the little harbour, to point out its position. Of course, that would be a hard day's work; but that they would, nevertheless, return the same night; and not leave Mrs. Seagrave alone with the children. Having accomplished this, Ready and William would then put the wheels and axle in the boat, and other articles required, such as saw, hatchets, and spades, and row round to the south side of the island, to find the little harbour. As soon as they had landed them, and secured the boat, they would then return by the path through the wood.

The next job would be to rail in the yam plan-

tation to keep off the pigs, and, at the same time, to drive the sheep and goats through the wood, that they might feed on the new pasture ground; the old one was to be reserved for cutting and making into hay for fodder. Ready and William were then to cut down cocoa-nut trees sufficient for the paling, fix up the posts, and when that was done, Mr. Seagrave was to come to them and assist them in railing it in, and drawing the timber. This they expected would be all done in about a month; and during that time, as Mrs. Seagrave and Juno would be, for the greatest part of it, left at the house, they were to employ themselves in clearing the garden of weeds, and making preparation for fencing it in.

As soon as this important work had been completed, the boat would return to the bay with a load of prickly pears for the garden fence, and then they were to direct their attention to the stores which had been saved from the wreck, and were lying in the cove where they had

first landed. When they had examined them, and brought round what were required, and secured them in the storehouse, they would then have a regular survey of the island by land and by water, and make a map of it, which Mr. Seagrave knew very well how to do. Such were the arrangements proposed for the season of fine weather which had now commenced. But man proposes and God disposes, as will be shewn by the interruption of their intended projects which we shall have to narrate in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

As usual, Ready was the first up on the following morning, and having greeted Juno, who followed him out of the house, he set off on his accustomed rounds, to examine into the stock and their other possessions. He was standing in the garden at the point. First he thought that it would be necessary to get ready some sticks for the peas, which were now seven or eight inches out of the ground; he had proceeded a little farther, to where the calivances, or French harricot beans, had been sown, and had decided upon the propriety of hoeing up the earth round them, as they were a very valuable article of food, that would keep, and afford many a good dish during the

rainy or winter season. He had gone on to ascertain if the cucumber seeds had shewn themselves above ground, and was pleased to find that they were doing well. He said to himself, "We have no vinegar, that I know of, but we can preserve them in salt and water, as they do in Russia; it will be a change, at all events;" and then he raised his eyes and looked out to the offing, and, as usual, scanned the horizon. He thought he saw a ship to the north-east, and he applied his telescope to his eye. He was not mistaken—it was a vessel.

The old man's heart beat quick; he dropped his telescope on his arm, and fetched some heavy breaths before he could recover from the effect of this unexpected sight. After a minute, he again put his telescope to his eye, and then made her out to be a brig, under topsails and top-gallant sails, steering directly for the island.

Ready walked to the rocky point, from which

they fished, and sat down to reflect. Could it be that the vessel had been sent after them, or that she had by mere chance come among the islands? He decided after a short time that it must be chance, for none could know that they were saved, much less that they were on the island. Her steering towards the island must then be either that she required water or something else; perhaps she would alter her course and pass by them. "At all events," thought the old man, "we are in the hands of God, who will, at his own time and in his own way, do with us as he thinks fit. I will not at present say any thing to Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave. It would be cruel to raise hopes which might end in disappointment. A few hours will decide. And yet I cannot do without help—I must trust Master William—he is a noble boy, that, and clever beyond his years; if he lives, he will turn out a great, and, what is better, a good man."

Ready rose up again, examined the vessel with his telescope, and then walked towards the house. William was up, and the remainder of the family were stirring.

"William," said Ready to him, as they walked away from the house, "I have a secret to tell you, which you will at once see the necessity of not telling to any one at present. A few hours will decide the question." William readily gave his promise. "There is a vessel off the island; she may be the means of rescuing us, or she may pass without seeing us. It would be too cruel a disappointment to your father and mother, if the latter were the case."

William stared at Ready, and for a moment could not speak, his excitement was so great.

"Oh, Ready, how grateful I am! How I do thank God! I trust that we may be taken away, for you have no idea how my poor father suffers in silence—and so does my mother."

"I know it, Master William, I know it, and it is natural; they do their best to control their yearnings, and they can do no more. But now, Master William, we must be quick, and at work before breakfast. But stop, I will shew you the vessel."

Ready caught the vessel in the field of the telescope, which he leant against the trunk of a cocoa-nut, and William put his eye to the glass.

"Do you see her, sir?"

"O yes, Ready, and she is coming this way."

"Yes, sir, she is steering right for the island; but do not talk so loud; I will put the telescope down here, and we will go about our work; there is an axe at the storehouse. Come, Master William; come quick, before your father leaves the house."

William and Ready went to the storehouse for the axe. Ready selected a very slight cocoa-nut

tree nearest to the beach, which he cut down, and as soon as the top was taken off, with the assistance of William, he carried it down to the point.

"Now, Master William, go for a shovel and dig a hole here, that we may fix it up as a flag-staff. When all is ready, I will go for a small block and some rope for halyards to hoist up the flags as soon as the vessel is likely to see them. When the hole is deep enough, come up to breakfast as if nothing had happened. At breakfast-time, I shall propose that you and I get the boat out of the sand and examine her, and give Mr. Seagrave some work indoors."

"But the flags, Ready; they are round my mother's bed. How shall we get them?"

"Suppose I say that it is time that the house should be well cleaned, and that the canvas hangings of the beds should be taken out to be aired this fine day. Ask your father to take the direc-

tion of the work while we dig out the boat; that will employ them all inside the house."

"Yes, that will do, Ready."

During breakfast-time, Ready observed that he intended to get the boat out of the sand, and that William should assist him.

"And what am I to do, Ready?" said Mr. Seagrave.

"Why, sir, I think, now that the rains are over, it would not be a bad thing if we were to air bedding, as they say at sea; it is a fine, warm day, and if all the bedding was taken out of the house and well shaken, and then left out to air, it would be a very good job over; for you see, sir, I have thought more than once that the house does smell a little close."

"It will be a very good thing, Ready," observed Mrs. Seagrave; "and, at the same time, Juno and I will give the house a thorough cleaning and sweeping."

"Had we not better have the canvas screens down, and air them too?" said William.

"Yes, sir," replied Ready; "we had better air every thing. We will assist in taking down the screens and flags, and spread them out to air, and then, if Mr. Seagrave has no objection, we will leave him to superintend and assist Madam Seagrave and Juno."

"With all my heart," replied Mr. Seagrave. "We have done breakfast, and will begin as soon as you please."

Ready and William took down the canvas screens and flags, and went out of the cottage with them; they spread out the canvas at some distance from the house, and then William went down to the beach with the flags, while Ready procured the block and small rope to hoist them up with.

Ready's stratagem answered well. Without being perceived by those in the cottage, the flag-

staff was raised, and fixed in the ground, and the flags all ready for hoisting; then Ready and William returned to the fuel-stack, and each carried down as much stuff as they could hold, that they might make a smoke to attract the notice of those on board of the vessel. All this did not occupy much more than an hour, during which the brig continued her course steadily towards the island. When Ready first saw her the wind was light, but latterly the breeze had increased very much, and at last the brig took in her top-gallant sails. The horizon behind the vessel, which had been quite clear, was now banked up with clouds, and the waves curled in white foam over the reefs of rocks extending from the island.

"The breeze is getting up strong, Master William," said Ready, "and she will soon be down, if she is not frightened at the reefs, which she can see plainer now the water is rough, than she could before."

"I trust she will not be afraid," replied William. "How far do you think she is off now?"

"About five miles, Master William; not more. The wind has hauled round more to the southward, and it is banking up fast, I see. I fear that we shall have another smart gale; however, it won't last long. Come, Master William, let us hoist the flags; we must not lose a chance; the flags will blow nice and clear for them to see them."

William and Ready hoisted up the ensign first, and below it the flag, with the ship's name, "*Pacific*," in large letters upon it. "Now, then," said Ready, as he made fast the halyards, "let us strike a light and make a smoke; that will attract their notice."

As soon as the cocoa-nut leaves were lighted, Ready and William threw water upon them, so as to damp them and procure a heavy column of smoke. The vessel approached rapidly, and they were watching her in silent suspense, when they

perceived Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave, Juno carrying Albert, with Tommy and Caroline running down as fast as they could to the beach. The fact was, that Tommy, tired of work, had gone out of the house and walked towards the beach; there he perceived, first, the flags hoisted, and then he detected the vessel off the island. He immediately ran back to the house, crying out, "Papa! Mamma! Capt. Osborne come back—come back in a big ship." At this announcement, Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave ran out of the house, perceived the vessel and the flags flying, and, as we have stated, ran as fast as they could down to where William and Ready were standing by the flag-staff.

"Oh! Ready, why did you not tell us this before?" exclaimed Mr. Seagrave, out of breath.

"I wish you had not known it now, sir," replied Ready; but, however, it can't be helped; it was done out of kindness, Mr. Seagrave."

"Yes, indeed it was, papa."

Mrs. Seagrave dropped down on the rock, and burst into tears. Mr. Seagrave was equally excited.

"Does she see us, Ready?" exclaimed he at last.

"No, sir, not yet, and I waited till she did, before I made it known to you," replied Ready.

"She is altering her course, Ready," said William.

"Yes, sir, she has hauled to the wind; she is afraid of coming too near to the reefs."

"Surely she is not leaving us," exclaimed Mrs. Seagrave.

"No, madam; but she does not see us yet."

"She does! she does!" cried William, throwing up his hat; "see, she hoists her ensign."

"Very true, sir; she does see us. Thanks be to God."

Mr. Seagrave embraced his wife, who threw herself sobbing into his arms, kissed his chil-

dren with rapture, and wrung old Ready's hand. He was almost frantic with joy. William was equally delighted. Juno grinned and laughed, while the tears ran down her cheeks, and Tommy took little Caroline by her two hands and they danced round and round together.

VESSEL HOISTING HER ENSIGN.

As soon as they were a little more composed,

Ready observed: "Mr. Seagrave, that they have seen us is certain, and what we must now do is to get our own boat out of the sand. We know the passage through the reefs, and they do not. I doubt if they will, however, venture to send a boat on shore, until the wind moderates a little. You see, sir, it is blowing up very strong just now."

"But you don't think it will blow harder, Ready?"

"I am sorry to say, sir, that I do. It looks very threatening to the southward, and until the gale is over, they will not venture near an island so surrounded with rocks. It would be very imprudent if they did. However, sir, a few hours will decide."

"But, surely," said Mrs. Seagrave, "even if it does blow, they will not leave the island without taking us off. They will come after the gale is over."

"Yes, madam, if they can, I do think they

will; but God knows, some men have hard hearts, and feel little for the misery of others."

The brig had, in the meantime, kept away again, as if she was running in; but very soon afterwards she hauled to the wind, with her head to the northward, and stood away from the island.

"She is leaving us," exclaimed William, mournfully.

"Hard-hearted wretches!" said Mr. Seagrave, with indignation.

"You are wrong to say that, sir," replied Ready: "excuse me, Mr. Seagrave, for being so bold; but the fact is, that if I was in command of that vessel, I should do just as they have done. The gale rises fast, and it would be very dangerous for them to remain where they now are. It does not at all prove that they intend to leave us; they but consult their own safety, and, when the gale is over, we shall, I trust, see them again."

No reply was made to Ready's judicious remarks. The Seagraves only saw that the vessel

was leaving them, and their hearts sank. They watched her in silence, and as she gradually diminished to the view, so did their hopes depart from them. The wind was now fierce, and a heavy squall, with rain, obscured the offing, and the vessel was no longer to be distinguished. Mr. Seagrave turned to his wife, and mournfully offered her his arm. They walked away from the beach without speaking; the remainder of the party, with the exception of old Ready, followed them. How different was their return to the house from the joyous descent to the beach. Ready remained some time with his eyes in the direction where the vessel was last seen. He was melancholy, for he had a foreboding that it would be seen no more. At last he hauled down the ensign and flag, and, throwing them over his shoulder, followed the disconsolate party to the house.

CHAPTER XV.

When Ready arrived, he found them all plunged in such deep distress, that he did not consider it advisable to say any thing. The evening closed in; it was time to retire. The children had already been put to bed; but Mr. Seagrave remained without speaking, holding his wife by her hand. Mrs. Seagrave's head was rested upon her husband's shoulder, and an occasional low sob was to be heard. The countenance of Mr. Seagrave was not only gloomy, but morose. The hour for retiring to rest had long passed when Ready broke the silence by saying, "Surely, you do not intend to sit up all night, Mr. Seagrave?"

"Oh! no; there's no use sitting up, now," re-

plied Mr. Seagrave, rising up impatiently. "Come, my dear, let us go to bed."

Mrs. Seagrave rose, and retired behind the canvas screen. Her husband seemed as if he was about to follow her, when Ready, without speaking, laid the Bible on the table before him. Mr. Seagrave did not appear to notice it; but William touched his father's arm, pointed to the book, and then went inside of the screen, and led out his mother.

"God forgive me!" exclaimed Mr. Seagrave. "In my selfishness and discontent I had forgotten—"

"Yes, sir, you had forgotten those words, 'Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Those words are true, sir; I have felt them to be so."

"I am ashamed of myself," said Mrs. Seagrave, bursting into tears.

Mr. Seagrave opened the Bible, and read the psalm. As soon as he had closed the book,

"good night" were all the words that passed, and they all retired to rest.

During the night, the wind howled and the rain beat down. The children slept soundly, but Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave, Ready, and William, were awake during the whole of the night, listening to the storm, and occupied with their own thoughts. It was the most unhappy night that had been passed since they first landed.

Ready was dressed before daylight, and out on the beach before the sun had risen. The gale was at its height; and, after a careful survey with his telescope, he could see nothing of the vessel. He remained on the beach till breakfast-time, when he was summoned by William, and returned to the house. He found Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave up, and more composed than they were the evening before; and they welcomed him warmly.

"I fear, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave, "that you have no good news for us."

"No, sir; nor can you expect any good news until after the gale is over."

"Tell me, Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave, "do you really think that the vessel will come back for us?"

"I will tell you what our chances are, madam, and I can do no more. The vessel could not remain here during the gale—that is certain; and there is no saying what the effects of the gale may be. She may lie to, and not be far from us when the gale is over; or she may be obliged to scud before the gale, and run some hundred miles from us. Then, madam, comes the next chance. I think, by her running for the island, that she was short of water; the question is, then, whether she may not find it necessary to run for the port she is bound to, or water at some other place. You know, madam, that a captain of a vessel is bound to do his best for the owners. At the same time I do think, that if she can with propriety come back for us she will. The ques-

tion is, first, whether she can; and, secondly, whether the captain is a humane man, and will do so at his own inconvenience."

"There is but poor comfort in all that, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave.

"It is useless holding out false hopes, sir," replied Ready; "but even if the vessel continues her voyage, I consider we have much to be thankful for."

"In what, Ready?"

"Why, sir, no one knew whether we were in existence or not, and probably we never should have been searched for; but now we have made it known, and by the ship's name on the flag they know who we are, and, if they arrive safe in port, will not fail to communicate the intelligence to your friends. Is not that a great deal to be thankful for? We may not be taken off by this vessel, but we have every hope that another will be sent out to us."

"Very true, Ready; I ought to have seen that

before; but my despair and disappointment were yesterday so great, that it almost took away my reason. We must trust in God."

"I'm glad to hear you say that, sir," replied Ready; "I thought you would soon return to your usual frame of mind. I felt for you, I assure you; and indeed I feel for you now. I know how dreadful this state of suspense must be."

"Let us say no more about it, Ready; we are but imperfect creatures; and God is merciful when we repent of our folly and our wickedness."

The gale continued during the day, and shewed no symptoms of abatement, when they again retired for the night. The following day Ready was up early, as usual, and William accompanied him to the beach.

"I don't think that it blows so hard as it did, Ready."

"No, Master William, it does not; the gale is breaking, and by night, I have no doubt, will be over. It is, however, useless looking for the

vessel, as she must be a long way from this. It would take her a week, perhaps, to come back to us if she was to try to do so, unless the wind should change to the northward or westward."

"Ready! Ready!" exclaimed William, pointing to the south-east part of the reef; "what is that? Look! it's a boat."

Ready put his telescope to his eye. "It's a canoe, Master William, and there are people in it."

"Why, where can they have come from, Ready? See! they are among the breakers; they will be lost. Let us go towards them, Ready."

They hastened along the beach to the spot nearest to where the canoe was tossing on the surf, and watched it as it approached the shore.

"Master William, this canoe must have been blown off from the large island, which lies out there;" and Ready again looked through his telescope: "there are two people in it, and they are islanders. Poor things! they struggle hard for

their lives, and seem much exhausted; but they have passed through the most dangerous part of the reef."

"Yes," replied William, "they will soon be in smoother water; but the surf on the beach is very heavy."

"They won't mind that, if their strength don't fail them—they manage the canoe beautifully."

During this conversation the canoe had rapidly come towards the land. In a moment or two afterwards, it passed through the surf and grounded on the beach. The two people in it had just strength enough left to paddle through the surf, and then they dropped down in the bottom of the canoe, quite exhausted.

"Let's drag the canoe higher up, Master William. Poor creatures! they are nearly dead."

While dragging it up, Ready observed that the occupants were both women: their faces were tattooed all over, which disfigured them very much;

CANOE DRIVEN ON THE ISLAND.

otherwise they were young, and might have been good-looking.

"Shall I run up and get something for them, Ready?"

"Do, Master William; ask Juno to give you some of whatever there is for breakfast; any thing warm."

William soon returned with some thin oatmeal

porridge, which Juno had been preparing for breakfast; and a few spoonfuls being forced down the throats of the two natives, they gradually revived. William then left Ready, and went up to acquaint his father and mother with this unexpected event.

William soon returned with Mr. Seagrave, and as the women were now able to sit up, they hauled up the canoe as far as they could, to prevent her being beat to pieces. They found nothing in the canoe, except a piece of matting and the two paddles which had been used by the natives. The latter were very curiously carved, as well as the bow of the canoe.

"You see, sir," said Ready, "it is very clear that these two poor women, having been left in charge of the canoe, have been blown off from the shore of one of the islands to the south-east; they must have been contending with the gale ever since the day before yesterday, and, as it appears, with-

out food or water. It's a mercy that they gained this island."

"It is so," replied Mr. Seagrave; "but to tell the truth, I am not over pleased at their arrival. It proves what we were not sure of before, that we have very near neighbours, who may probably pay us a very unwelcome visit."

"That may be, sir," replied Ready; "still these two poor creatures being thrown on shore here does not make the matter worse, or the danger greater. Perhaps it may turn to our advantage; for if these women learn to speak English before any other islanders visit us, they will interpret for us, and be the means, perhaps, of saving our lives."

"Would their visit be so dangerous, then, Ready?"

"Why, sir, a savage is a savage, and, like a child, wishes to obtain whatever he sees; especially he covets what he may turn to use, such as iron, &c. If they came, and we concealed a portion, and gave up the remainder of our goods, we might

escape; but still there is no trusting to them, and I would infinitely prefer defending ourselves against numbers to trusting to their mercy."

"But how can we defend ourselves against a multitude?"

"We must be prepared, sir: if we can fortify ourselves, with our muskets we would be more than a match for hundreds."

Mr. Seagrave turned away. After a pause he said, "It is not very pleasant to be now talking of defending ourselves against savages, when we hoped two days ago to be leaving the island. Oh, that that brig would make its appearance again!"

"The wind is going down fast, sir," observed Ready; "it will be fine weather before the evening. We may look out for her; at all events, for the next week I shall not give up all hopes."

"A whole week, Ready! Alas! how true it is, that hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

"It is a severe trial, Mr. Seagrave; but we

must submit when we are chastened. We had better get these poor creatures up to the house, and let them recover themselves."

"Yes, Ready; I presume they will understand signs."

Ready then beckoned to them to get on their feet, which they both did, although with some difficulty. He then went in advance, making a sign for them to follow; they understood him, and made the attempt, but were so weak, that they would have fallen if they had not been supported by Mr. Seagrave and William.

It required a long time for them to arrive at the house. Mrs. Seagrave, who knew what had happened, received them very kindly, and Juno had a mess ready, which she put before them. They ate a little, and then lay down, and were soon sound asleep.

"It is fortunate for us that they are women," observed Mr. Seagrave: "we should have had great difficulty had they been men."

"Yes, sir," replied Ready; "but still we must not trust women too much at first, for they are savages. If it is the will of God that we still remain on this island, they may be very useful to us in many ways—indeed, I may say, be very valuable to us, as we have plenty of employment for them."

"Where shall we put them to-night, Ready?"

"Why, sir, I have been thinking about that. I wish we had a shed close to us; but as we have not, we must let them sleep in the storehouse."

"Yes, that will do very well."

We must now pass over a space of fifteen days, in which there was nothing done. The expectation of the vessel returning was still alive, although each day decreased these hopes. Every morning Ready and William were at the beach with the telescope, and the whole of the day was passed in surmises, hopes, and fears. In fact, the appearance of the vessel and the expectation of leaving the island had completely overturned

all the regularity and content of our island party. No other subject was broached—not any of the work proposed was begun, as it was useless to do any thing if they were to leave the island. After the first week had passed, they felt that every day their chances were more adverse, and at the end of the fortnight all hopes were very unwillingly abandoned. They had had time to school themselves into resignation, and now once more turned their thoughts to their own immediate pursuits.

The Indian women had, in the meantime, recovered their fatigues, and appeared to be very mild and tractable. Whatever they were able to do, they did cheerfully, and had already gained a few words of English. The party to explore was again talked over, and arranged for the following Monday, when a new misfortune fell on them, which disconcerted all their arrangements.

On the Saturday morning, when Ready, as

usual, went his rounds, as he walked along the beach, he perceived that the Indian canoe was missing. It had been hauled up clear of the water, so that it could not have floated away. Ready's heart misgave him; he looked through his telescope in the direction of the large island, and thought he could distinguish a speck on the water at a great distance. As he was thus occupied, William came down to him.

"Master William," said Ready, "I fear those island women have escaped in their canoe. Run up, and see if they are in the outhouse, or anywhere else, and let me know as soon as you can."

William in a few minutes returned, breathless, stating that the women were not to be found, and that they had evidently carried away with them a quantity of the large nails and other pieces of iron which were in the small kegs in the storehouse.

"This is bad, Master William—very bad indeed; this is worse than the vessel not coming back."

"Why, we can do without them, Ready."

"Yes, sir; but when they get back to their own people, and shew them the iron they have brought with them, and describe how much more there is to be had, depend upon it, we shall have a visit from them in numbers, that they may obtain more. I ought to have known better than to have left the canoe here; it should have been burnt. We must go and consult with Mr. Seagrave, for the sooner we begin to work now, the better. Come, Master William; but recollect, we must make light of this to your mamma."

They communicated the intelligence to Mr. Seagrave when they were outside. He at once perceived their danger; but considered it better to acquaint Mrs. Seagrave with it, and to conceal nothing.

This was done accordingly; and then they held a council, and came to the following resolutions:—

That it would be necessary that they should

immediately stockade the storehouse, so as to render it impossible for any one to get in; and that, as soon as the fortification was complete, the storehouse should be turned into their dwelling-house; and such stores as could not be put within the stockade should be removed to their present house, or concealed in the cocoa-nut grove. That after they had thus arranged for their security against any sudden attack, they would follow up their former plans.

It was decided that nothing should be begun on that day, Saturday; that Sunday should be spent in devout prayer for help and encouragement from the Almighty, who would do towards them as his wisdom should ordain; and that, on Monday, with the blessing of God, they would recommence their labour.

"I don't know why, but I feel more courage now that there is a prospect of danger, than I felt when there was little or none," said Mrs. Seagrave.

9358

"I do not doubt it, madam; and should it be called into request, that you will prove it; which I hope may not be the case."

"How little do we know what the day may bring forth," exclaimed Mr. Seagrave. "How joyful were our anticipations when the vessel hoisted her colours; we felt sure that we were to be taken off the island. The same gale that drove the vessel away brought down to us the island women. The fair weather after the gale, which we hoped would have brought back the vessel to our succour, on the contrary, enabled the women to escape in the canoe, and make known our existence to those who may come to destroy us. How true it is that man plans in vain: how true that he is as naught; and that it is only by the Almighty will and pleasure that he can obtain his ends. All that we can say is, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'"

I again bid farewell to my young readers: I

hope it will be but for a short time. The next volume will wind up the narrative; and will tell them what became of Masterman Ready, Mr. Seagrave, and his family.

END OF VOL. II.

Printed by J. L. Cox & Sons, 74 & 75, Great Queen Street,
Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

PR4977
M28
1841
v.2